

Hafa Adai!

Ada: I don't know how we're going to pay PSS teachers. **PAGE 2**
Up to 30-day imprisonment for curfew violators. **PAGE 3**

75¢

Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

www.saipantribune.com

WEDNESDAY APRIL 1, 2020

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AMP SHUTDOWN

Effective yesterday, all areas of the American Memorial Park were closed to encourage the residents of Saipan to comply with social distancing guidelines in support of federal and local efforts to slow the spread of the coronavirus. All access points into the park along pathways, roads, and parking areas are closed, including the marinas at Smiling Cove and Outer Cove. **Story on Page 6**

KRIZEL TUAZON

No UA flights April 6-30

- **Medevac transport for health emergencies will not be disrupted**
- **Those who want to return or leave the CNMI have only this Sunday to fly**

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

United Airlines has granted the request of Gov. Ralph DLG Torres to suspend all its flights into and out of the CNMI from Guam from April 6 to 30, 2020, cutting off airline access to and from the CNMI for nearly a month.

The Commonwealth Ports Authority notified the public yesterday that the last flight into and out of the CNMI from Guam will be this Sunday, April 5.

This follows the confirmation of two COVID-19 cases in the CNMI and one death at the quarantine center on Saipan that is suspected to be due

See **FLIGHTS** on **Page 4**

All PSS graduations cancelled

By **KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA**
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Education Commissioner Dr. Alfred Ada has confirmed that all Public School System graduation and promotion ceremonies for school year

2019-2020 are cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

According to Ada, he doesn't want to keep anyone's hopes up and, although he doesn't want to cancel the graduations, it's become absolutely

See **ALL PSS** on **Page 4**

2nd Guam coronavirus death

By **JUSTINE NAUTA**
justine_nauta@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Eight days after Guam saw its first COVID-19 death, another COVID-19 patient who was admitted to Guam Memorial Hospital last March 25 passed away yesterday morning, according to several media reports.

A *Pacific Daily News* report states that Guam Gov. Lou Leon Guerrero confirmed that the patient was a 79-year-old male. The man

AT A GLANCE

As of March 31, 2020

GUAM	CNMI
Tested: 386	Tested: 20
Negative: 295	Negative: 4
Positive: 58	Positive: 2
Recovered: 7	Pending: 11
Deaths: 2	Deaths: 0*

*The CNMI has had one death but the test result on the deceased remains pending and he has not been identified yet as positive for COVID-19

Source: Joint Information Center - Guam, Commonwealth Health Care Corp

had no recent travel history but had existing health problems, including colon cancer, she added.

The patient and his family had ordered a do-not-resuscitate, which means that GMH was not allowed to take extraordinary measures to save his life. Additionally, the man had been on a morphine drip to keep him comfortable.

According to the *Guam Daily Post*, Dr. Joleen Aguon, Guam's CO-See **2ND** on **Page 4**



KFC Saipan gave a total of 100 meals to the CNMI's health care frontliners yesterday.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

KFC feeds health care frontliners

By **BEA CABRERA**
beacabrersaipan@gmail.com
CORRESPONDENT

The CNMI franchise of fastfood giant KFC has stepped up to the plate with a donation of 100 food packs yesterday to CNMI health care frontliners as a show of support for their efforts.

KFC Saipan, together with YUM! See **KFC** on **Page 4**

INSIDE



BUSINESS

Gasoline prices have dropped to their lowest levels in four years and are sure to go lower.

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NATION

New York's governor urgently appealed for medical volunteers amid a large number of deaths.

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WORLD

As the coronavirus pandemic widens, soldiers patrol the streets with machine guns.

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Local

Ada: I don't know how we're going to pay PSS teachers

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Education Commissioner Dr. Alfred Ada said that the Public School System is currently struggling to pay teachers their salaries and is unsure when they will pay the remaining 30% that is owed from last payroll.

In a phone interview with Ada, he said that he doesn't know how and when PSS will

be able to pay the remaining 30% of teachers' salaries, let alone next payroll. This is because the CNMI's budget continues to dwindle as a result of no revenue collection due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Last pay period, locally funded teachers were only paid 70% of their salaries, while federally paid employees were paid 100%.

"What I'm worried about is next payday. I don't know

where we're going to get that money but we will keep looking," said Ada.

He assured, though, that he will make sure that teachers are paid, even for just a portion of their salaries, next payroll.

"I will make sure they will get paid. I don't know how, but I will find a way. The board is going to help pay these teachers. These teachers, this is their livelihood, their passion, they need this money

to survive too," he said.

Ada said he is currently still looking for funding sources and will plead and beg if he has to. "I am going to plead and beg for money elsewhere. I don't know where to go. I can't turn to federal because they are highly regulated, we're not allowed to use that for personnel. We need local cash but we don't have local cash," he said.

According to *Saipan Tri-*

bune archives, a little over 800 locally funded PSS staff were paid only 70% of their bi-weekly salary last pay period.

Kimo Rosario, PSS director of Finance, said that, in the last pay period, PSS only received \$727,000 in local funds. Of that amount, \$230,000 went to FICA (Federal Insurance Contributions Act) payment. The

remaining amount was the net pay for employees.

"Our budget was revised back in February, [which] only leaves us with \$14 million to operate for the next eight months. That was further revised due to dwindling collections, leaving PSS with practically nothing," he said.

Atalig urges Torres to bar passenger travel to Rota

Rota Mayor Efraim M. Atalig has urged Gov. Ralph DLG Torres to closed all ports of entry for passenger travel into the municipality to prevent the entry of the coronavirus into Rota.

In a letter dated March 30, 2020 Atalig described the closure of all ports of entry into Rota as "urgent."

"I grow fearful each day knowing that the people of Rota, most especially our *man'amko* and those with a compromised immune system, are at risk when the ports of entry remains open. Our limited resources and fragile population on the island [have] added much pressure to my administration to seek your help in requesting that all ports within the municipality of Rota be closed to transporting passengers to/from Saipan unless transporting people for

any COVID-19 work or emergency referrals," he stated in his letter.

Atalig's request does not cover the continued transport of goods, supplies, and other commodities "for the survival of our people," on the condition that all captains and crew members should have in their possession a health clearance from Guam or Saipan.

"As the mayor of Rota, making this hard decision is part of the unspoken role of a leader but I must always keep the safety and wellbeing of our community my top priority during this health emergency. It is a critical step for the island of Rota and our people, but one greatly needed as the people need to know that Rota is a safe place and will continue to be so," he added.

(*Saipan Tribune*)

Zoning board exec sues cop to clear ownership of land

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

CNMI Zoning Board vice chair Joe E. Ayuyu Jr. is suing a police officer to clear his ownership of a land in San Vicente encompassing an area of 24,766 square meters.

Ayuyu, through counsel Michael W. Dotts, is suing for quiet title Edward M. Cepeda, who is an heir of Luis Manibusan Cepeda and has claimed an interest in the property.

Ayuyu asked the Superior Court to issue a judgment declaring him as the owner in fee simple absolute of the property.

As of press time yesterday, *Saipan Tribune* was still trying to get comments from Edward Cepeda.

According to Dotts in the complaint, on Oct. 18, 1983, the Marianas Public Land Corp. deeded the property to Luis M. Cepeda and Guadalupe M. Cepeda.

Dotts said the deed noted that the Cepas had first entered the property in July 1975 and had occupied and improved the property.

Dotts said Luis Cepeda

passed away in 2000 and at the time of his passing, Guadalupe Cepeda was the lawful wedded wife of Luis. By operation of law, the lawyer said, Guadalupe Cepeda became the sole owner of the property upon Luis' passing.

On Nov. 4, 2001, Guadalupe Cepeda conveyed the property to her son, Benjamin Cepeda, by deed of gift, Dotts said, along with other properties.

The lawyer said that, on Feb. 9, 2006, Benjamin Cepeda conveyed the property to Jose C. Ayuyu by warranty deed. The warranty deed was recorded with the Commonwealth Recorder's Office on Feb. 17, 2006.

Dotts said that, on Dec. 6, 2008, Jose C. Ayuyu and Marcia E. Ayuyu conveyed the property to their son, Jose E. Ayuyu Jr., by deed of gift.

Dotts said that on multiple occasions Edward Cepeda, the son of Luis and Guadalupe, has come onto the property and asserted it as his.

Dotts said Edward Cepeda and any other heir of Luis M. Cepeda have no right, title, or interests in the property.

Division of Coastal Resources Management

SUMMER INTERNSHIP

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Up to 30-day imprisonment for curfew violators

Following Gov. Ralph DLG Torres' updated directive, anyone who will get caught disregarding the enhanced 7pm to 6am curfew hours for all CNMI residents, and the strict limit of 10 people for social

RELATED NEWS

DPS to enforce curfew hours for all CNMI residents.

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gatherings, will be penalized.

The amended directive prohibits gatherings of more than 10 people in a single room or space, at the same time, for social, spiritual and recreational activities. This includes community, civic, public leisure, faith-based, or sporting events, parades, concerts, festivals, fiestas, conventions, fundraisers, and similar activities.

This is based on the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and the U.S. Public Health's recommendation of 10 or fewer people in line with the practice of social distancing.

Further, adults and minors caught loitering in any public streets, highways, roads, alleys, parks, public buildings, places of amusement, and entertainment, restaurants, cafes and

other eateries, or vacant lots and places in all of the CNMI, from 7pm until 6am, may be imprisoned for up to 30 days, and do community service for up to 250 hours.

"There are reports of persons gathering in the evenings for social or other gatherings. Such actions flout the government's efforts to promote staying at home and endanger the community through potential spread of COVID-19,"

Torres stated. "Imposing a curfew on all persons, adults and minors, will aid with the efforts to stop large social gatherings. It will also aid the CNMI in easing the load of our stretched law enforcement personnel by allowing fewer personnel to patrol greater amounts of the island."

Appropriate proceedings may be instituted under the provisions of the juvenile court law. Parents, guardians,

or adults having custody of minors who will be caught violating shall be fined not more than \$750.

First responders, medical workers, law enforcement officers, and private sector employees on duty within the curfew hours are exempted. Minors (under 18 years old) with their parent, guardian, or an adult, who are in the direct route driving and returning home, or who are on-duty during the curfew hours, are also exempted. *(Iva Maurin)*

Legislators join call for public to 'stay home'

With two confirmed COVID-19 cases, and following the Monday death of a quarantined man suspected of having the coronavirus, legislators, through social media, are echoing the call of the Torres administration for the community to take seriously all directives to stay home and follow social distancing protocols.

"With today's unfortunate news, we are strongly urged to once again remain vigilant against the spread of COVID-19. We must take seriously the actions asked by us to undertake, such as staying home and keeping distances from each other," said Rep. Luis John DLG Castro (R-Saipan).

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres announced Monday a curfew for all, expanding the initial curfew set for minors, as a

measure to further mitigate the spread of the COVID-19 threat in the CNMI. The governor also tightened the social gathering limit to 10 people, and people who would violate will be penalized.

"The mandatory curfew will be difficult and frustrating to some, but at this point, we have to do everything possible to try and stop the community spread," Rep. Edwin K. Propst (Ind-Saipan) said. "A large portion of our population employed by the government will continue to receive pay, and all the government is asking in return is that they stay and work from home. Part of staying home means not having people over and enforcing strict social distancing measures."

The minority leader further encouraged everyone to do

everything to help stop the spread of the virus, stressing that the islands' only hospital, and its health care workers, cannot be overwhelmed.

"We do not have the resources," Propst added.

The Commonwealth Health Center currently only has 86 beds (76 beds available) and 17 ventilators.

"Now we brace for more difficult days ahead. Protect yourselves, your loved ones, and our entire community and help stop the spread," said Rep. Tina Sablan (Ind-Saipan), who urged the community to take the public health directives seriously. "Wash your hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, don't touch your face, sanitize frequently, practice social distancing and stay at least 6 feet away from others at all times. Work from home if possible, no social gatherings, no beaches or parks, abide by the 7pm curfew that now applies to all of us."

She also appealed to everyone to stay home. "Please, please stay home. As much as possible stay home. Do these things as if your life and the lives of the people you love depend on it. Because they do." *(Iva Maurin)*

BECQ continues monitoring water safety

With people being kept indoors following Gov. Ralph DLG Torres' stay-home directive, the Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality assures that it continues to monitor the public water system to ensure that water is safe to use.

Division of Environmental Quality director Jonathan Arriola said that BECQ has always been monitoring the public water system to make sure there are no contaminants going into it.

"Especially now, with a lot of people staying home, using their water at home, there will be an increase in water usage, so we just want to make sure that the water that's running, that's coming out from your tap is actually safe to use," he said.

Safe Drinking Water Program manager Travis Spaeth echoed Arriola, and added that the SDW branch has been active in continuing efforts to ensure compliance with the Safe Drinking Water Act. "We continue to upload reporting data to our database that is linked with [the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency]. We continue to ensure sampling is completed by all water systems, and manage our day to day operations."

In addition, Spaeth disclosed that BECQ has worked with multiple agencies on bringing back the former Mariana Resort & Spa as a water system.

"They have been inactive for quite awhile so what that

entailed was working with all partner agencies on installing a new pump and motor at one of their wells, disinfecting the well, disinfecting two storage tanks and the distribution system," Spaeth said. "[The Commonwealth Utilities Corp.] took samples at the well and each tank and once the samples came back negative of total coliforms and e-coli, we were able to approve them activating the system again." Rep. Sheila Babauta (Ind-Saipan), in a livestream Sunday night, said that Mariana Resort is a quarantine facility, like Kanoa Resort, which is currently being used to quarantine COVID-19 persons under investigation, particularly those who have recently traveled to the CNMI.

As for Kanoa, Spaeth said that the hotel is already an active community water system so BECQ just continues to ensure that they complete their regular monitoring over time. "We continue to monitor to prevent any setbacks with the community water systems as a preventative measure to keep people as safe as possible."

Spaeth stressed that it is important to continue to monitor drinking water as any disruptions to public water systems, that could allow contaminants in, would only increase issues with the health of all customers. *(Iva Maurin)*

GOVERNOR'S COVID-19 GUIDANCE FOR BUSINESSES

AS OF MARCH 31, 2020

All businesses that have facilities open to the general public shall only be open to the public from

6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

All businesses that decide to remain open during these hours must implement the following strict guidelines:



SOCIAL DISTANCING

All customers must maintain a distance of at least six feet apart. Please ensure that there are visible customer line-up markers that are six feet apart leading to the cashier counter.

MAINTAINING CROWD CONTROL

Business must control the flow of traffic in their establishments. Please limit the number of customers within public facilities at any time to 50% of your permitted occupancy. The posting of "one-way" flow signs for entrances and "one-way" flow signs for exits is required.



SANITIZING REGULARLY & FREQUENTLY

Businesses must regularly and frequently clean all surfaces; sanitize main entrance door handles; sanitize handles of shopping baskets and shopping carts; sanitize handles for chill boxes, coolers, and freezers.

@GovernorCNMI



COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION
GOVERNOR'S COVID-19 TASK FORCE



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PSS to release \$1,000 incentive checks early

By **KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA**
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Public School System is working on disbursing this week the remaining balance of incentive checks under the Project Restart Retention Incentive program for school-based personnel.

In a phone interview with Education Commissioner Dr. Alfred Ada, he said that PSS is working on issuing the \$1,000 incentive checks to PSS instructors this week, even though it is originally supposed to be given out at the end of the school year.

“Project Restart is only for school-based personnel. They all will get \$1,000, but they were not supposed to get it until the end of the school year but we were able to get permission to give it out early, considering the COVID-19 situation,” he said.

Ada said PSS federal programs officer Tim Thornburgh reached out the U.S. Department of Education to release the over \$1.3 million balance early because PSS wanted to lift the teacher’s spirits in some way during these hard times.

Ada said he wanted to release the incentive checks early because teachers were

not paid their entire salary last pay period, with locally funded staff only receiving 70% of their salaries.

Thornburgh said during a special board meeting last Saturday that the schedule of the release of the incentive checks is at the discretion of the education commissioner.

“This is a situation where, if we really want to, we could do it, because it is an incentive to keep our teachers. ... We can do the drawdown [this week],” he said.

According to *Saipan Tribune* archives, all teachers, teacher aids, school administrators, substitute teachers, librarians, and other qualified school-based personnel were given \$1,000 each back in December as incentive pay under the Project Restart’s Retention Incentive program.

The grant is intended to retain school-based personnel and motivate them to stay for the entire school year. Each individual who qualifies gets \$2,000. The first payment was back in December and the second payment of \$1,000 was initially supposed to be disbursed at the end of the school year in June.

Thornburgh discovered the Retention Incentive Program under Project Restart, a federal program that awards grants that can be used for school operations, recruitment of teachers, renewal of teachers, rewards, and performance incentives for teachers.

CURFEW CHECK

Police are strictly enforcing the curfew hours. Following Gov. Ralph DLG Torres’ updated directive, anyone who will get caught disregarding the enhanced 7pm to 6am curfew hours for all CNMI residents, and the strict limit of 10 people for social gatherings, will be penalized.

CHEVY ALIPIO



FLIGHTS

From Page 1

to COVID-19 complications.

CPA said that United Airlines cancelled tomorrow’s flight, Thursday. “If you must return to, or leave the CNMI, make your travel arrangements immediately by contacting United Airlines at

1-800-864-8331,” said CPA in its press statement.

As this developed, CPA yesterday also informed the public that U.S. Postal Services’ air shipment of cargo to and from Guam, and medical evacuation transport for health emergencies will not be disrupted by the temporary suspension of the Guam/CNMI United Airlines flights.

CPA said daily transport of mail between the CNMI and Guam is serviced by Micronesian Air Cargo.

“For air cargo shipment services interisland, to and from Guam, please call Star Marianas Air at 288-9988 or 286-5366 for more information. Let’s flatten the curve CNMI by staying home!” CPA said.

CPA said that, with two con-

firmed COVID-19 cases in the CNMI, continued inbound arrivals, however limited, divert desperately needed resources away from addressing the Commonwealth’s immediate need to contain the further spread of COVID-19 in the community.

CPA board chair Kimberlyn King-Hinds said yesterday that they appreciate United

Airlines’ prompt response to the governor’s request and thank the company’s Saipan manager, David Baker, for his efforts to elevate this request to the highest levels.

“This was not the first [time we asked United Airlines to suspend flights] and I’m sure that if the governor deems it necessary to request an extension, he will do so again in the

best interest of the wellbeing of the people of the CNMI,” King-Hinds said.

Skymark Airlines Inc.’s last flights between Saipan and Japan were last March 25, temporarily closing the CNMI’s door to international flights. The suspension of Saipan-Narita, Narita-Saipan operation will be until May 10, 2020.

2ND

From Page 1

VID-19 medical director, confirmed that the patient sought help at the Guam Regional Medical City last March 24 and

was then transferred to GMH and was confirmed to have the virus last March 25.

Guam’s Department of Public Health and Social Services’ staff are currently conducting tracing and surveillance of those who might have had contact

with the male individual.

Guam’s first COVID-19 death

Last March 22, Guam saw its first COVID-19 death. The patient was a 68-year-old female who also had underlying

health issues.

The patient also had no recent travel history but might have contracted it from someone who did. The patient was also admitted to GMH where she remained in isolation throughout the week.

CNMI’s first death possibly linked to COVID-19

The CNMI saw its first death that is possibly related to COVID-19 complications. The patient was a 70-year-old man who was suspected of being

infected with the virus. He also had no travel history but had come into contact with someone who had tested positive for COVID-19.

The man passed away at the Kanoa Resort in Susupe on Monday.

ALL PSS

From Page 1

necessary for the safety of the students, PSS staff, and the entire community. The CNMI already has two positive cases of the coronavirus infections.

“At this point, we are canceling all graduations for now

until further notice. If something else comes up, like an idea, we will explore that. I don’t want to give any false hopes and say, ‘We might still have graduation,’” he said.

Ada added that Distance Education learning packets have also been cancelled until further notice because teachers and staff are afraid to leave

home and go to their respective campuses to prepare the packets and grade them.

Distance Education will now be called Enhancement Learning, according to Ada, which is strictly internet-based.

Enhancement Education will prioritize seniors to get them the necessary credits to

pursue higher education.

“It’s not equitable for everybody because not all families have the resources to do Enhancement Learning, but we are prioritizing the seniors, making sure that they can continue their education,” he said.

Also, PSS cancelled its Grab & Go Meal Distribution program as a result of

the COVID-19 outbreak in the CNMI.

PSS suspended all meal distributions until further notice because they lack the manpower to continue the program.

Ada explained that following the announcement of two positive COVID-19 cases in the CNMI last Saturday, many

of the volunteers who were helping out during the last three days of meal distribution no longer wanted to volunteer because they are afraid.

“Some of the workers are afraid to come out and continue distributing food to the public. We took that into consideration and it has created a shortage in manpower,” he said.

KFC

From Page 1

Foundation, made the donation in support of the latter’s initiative called “Feeding Our Local Health Care Heroes.”

According to Ramona Jones, CEO of Jones & Guer-

rero, which is the local franchisee of the Saipan branch of KFC/Taco Bell, helping and supporting the CNMI’s health care workers is a privilege. “We just want to give back to the community and support our health workers during these challenging times,” she said. “Our hope

is that this will inspire other local businesses to consider extending the same gesture if they are able.”

She said that KFC Saipan actively gives back to the community through deeds like this and having raffle promos for its customers.

KFC, along with Taco Bell

Saipan and TownHouse Furniture and Appliance, concluded their annual Grand Christmas Raffle last Dec. 31, selecting the winners from over 1,000 entries. KFC has been holding this appreciation raffle for their customers in the past four years.

Also, effective today, KFC

Saipan is open from 10:30am to 5pm but for take-out orders only, pursuant to Gov. Ralph DLG Torres’ directive that limits operations in the CNMI for businesses that have interactions with the general public.

YUM! Foundation is known for encouraging fast-

food franchises in the U.S. mainland to save extra food and donate them to non-profit organizations. The partnership between KFC and YUM! Foundation started in 1992 and has helped feed people doing extraordinary jobs that deal with community service.

CUC eliminates long queues at payment center

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp.'s social distancing rule at its payment center in Dandan and limited hours of operation caused a long queue of customers last week. But that line is no longer there this week after CUC announced late last week that it will allow its customers to pay one month's bill in three to six months.

"It's hot as there's no shade outside the building. But the flow is smooth," a customer said last Wednesday.

CUC customers have been lining up under a tent that

CUC put up outside the payment center and, when asked about it, CUC executive director Gary P. Camacho explained that they're practicing spacing or social distancing at the payment and customer service center and have closed the door to limit the number of people inside.

Camacho said they're only allowing up to 10 customers at a time and are requiring them to sanitize their hands with sanitizers before entering inside.

He said there's spacers or tapes on the floor to guide customers before they go to the cashier or to the customer

service counters.

"We need to protect our employees. But, by the same token, we also want to protect our consumers," he said, adding that they want to make sure that interactions are safe for both parties so they don't leave contaminated or the employees don't become contaminated.

Camacho said it's what's required as recommended by the governor and Commonwealth Health Care Corp. several times and they're just trying to make sure that they enforce it.

"We practice good action here at CUC for everybody," he said.

To avoid being trapped in a



FERDIE DE LA TORRE

Commonwealth Utilities Corp. customers form a long queue at the payment center in Dandan last Wednesday after CUC implemented social distancing and limited its hours due to coronavirus pandemic.

long line, Camacho said they are open from 8am to 1pm on weekdays so people don't need to be here first thing in the morning.

Camacho also encourages customers to do online payments, credit card payments on the phone, and also use the prepaid meters, the Nighthawks. "I still have good inventory of Nighthawk meters; they're web-based. You can pay, establish an account, CUC can do that and you could be able to pay your load through the internet as long as you have WiFi," he said.

Online payments, Camacho said, would eliminate and reduce the amount of people in line and minimize that interaction.

DFEMS expands personnel for COVID-19 response

The CNMI Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services has expanded the number of personnel assigned to the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force in response to the global pandemic.

Last Monday, March 23, 2020, the Department of Fire and EMS activated 13 personnel to assist with the COVID-19 pandemic, adding to meet the required needs throughout the week.

This is in addition to the 27 firefighter personnel that DFEMS activated last Saturday, March 28, 2020, after re-

ceiving information of the two positive cases of COVID-19 in the CNMI.

DFEMS' primary objectives are to:

- Transport passengers from the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport to Kanoa Resort (designated quarantine facility).

- Escort airline passengers to assigned rooms.

- Deliver drop-off items to patients in their rooms and persons under investigation.

- Transport PUI from the Commonwealth Health Center to quarantine site.

- Decontaminate after every drop-off, transport, and contact with any quarantined person(s).

- Assist CHC medical personnel by remaining on standby for 24 hours for any emergency transport needed for quarantined person(s)

- Assist CHCC in conducting secondary health assessment to all inbound passengers.

DFEMS continues to support the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and its emergency medical support function. (PR)

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PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)
RFP20-CHCC/FACILITIES-003

NEW SUBMISSION DEADLINE: APRIL 30, 2020 TIME: 10:00 AM

"FIRE RATED DOOR REPLACEMENT & NEW INSTALLATION"

INTERESTED PARTIES CAN DOWNLOAD THIS REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)/INVITATION TO BID (ITB) FROM THE CHCC WEBSITE [WWW.CHCC.GOV.MP]. ONCE AT THE SITE, NAVIGATE TO RFP'S TAB ON THE BOTTOM NAVIGATION BAR. CLICK ON THE URL FOR THIS RFP/ITB. YOU WILL BE REQUIRED TO ENTER DATA TO ALLOW US TO TRACK ALL REQUESTS FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY.

THE CHCC RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL PROPOSAL AND TO WAIVE ANY IMPERFECTIONS IN ANY PROPOSAL, IF TO DO SO SHALL BE IN THE INTEREST OF THE CHCC. ALL PROPOSALS SHALL BECOME THE EXCLUSIVE PROPERTY OF THE COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION.

***MANDATORY ASSESSMENT ON APRIL 14, 2020**
@ 9:00 A.M. SAIPAN TIME @ THE CHCC FACILITY/MAINTENANCE DEPARTMENT.

/S/ ESTHER L. MUNA
CHCC CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

/S/ CORAZON P. ADA
CHCC DIRECTOR OF P&S

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
Office of the Executive Director

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
CUC-IFB-20-001

SUPPLY & DELIVERY OF FUEL FOR POWER GENERATION

The Office of the Executive Director for the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed bids for the supply and delivery of approximately 20,000,000 US gallons annually of **No. 2-D S15 Ultra Low Sulfur Diesel Fuel** for CUC Power Generation facilities on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota. The No. 2-D S15 Ultra Low Sulfur Diesel shall be uniform, first quality, ultra-low sulfur type, which shall conform in all aspects to the requirements, as set forth in "Standard Specification for Diesel Fuel Oil" **ASTM D975-14**.

All Bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the Offeror due to lack of information or understanding of the proposal requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a proposal or supply under the contract.

The Bid Price shall remain the same throughout the term of the contract except for the variation in the MOPS and government taxes, duties and fees.

Prospective Bidders must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The Bid Package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of \$200.00 (non-refundable) for one IFB package set.

One (1) Original and Five (5) Hard Copies of the bid shall be submitted in a sealed envelope marked **"CUC-IFB-20-001, Supply and Delivery of Fuel for Power Generation"** to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, **no later than 10:00 AM (ChST) April 9, 2020**, at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Bids mailed via postal or courier service must be received on or before due date and time or post-marked before due date and time. Bid shall be submitted on the provided Bid Forms. Bidders are required to complete all Bid Forms. Bidders may supplement this form as appropriate. Bids will be required to be submitted under a condition of irrevocability for a period of 60 days after submission. Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered.

A Bid Guarantee of fifteen (15%) percent of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands or otherwise secured in a manner satisfactory to CUC, for the protection of all persons supplying labor and material to the contractor or its subcontractors for the performance of the work provided for in the contract. All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification shall be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). **Bidders are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.**

All responses to this IFB should take into account any and all taxes, including excise tax, which will become the obligation of the proponent awarded a contract. Successful proponents will be required to submit a copy of a valid CNMI Business license in compliance with the Contractor's Registration and Licensing Laws of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, upon award of the contract.

Proponents shall be required to comply with all applicable CNMI and Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations.

This Invitation for Bids does not commit CUC to the award of a contract or contracts, nor to pay any cost incurred in the preparation and submission of bids in anticipation of a contract. Bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a bid under the contract.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from pre-registered prospective bidders and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on March 24, 2020** to Manny B. Sablan, CUC-Purchasing Administrator via email address manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to CUC-Power Engineer, Venugopal Prabhakar via email address venu.pabrahakar@cucgov.org and Christie Sablan, CUC-Purchasing Technician, Senior via email address christie.sablan@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids for any reason and to waive any defects in said bid, if in its sole opinion, to do so would be in the best interest of CUC. All bids shall become the property of CUC.

GARY P. CAMACHO
Executive Director

MANNY BOYER SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
Office of the Executive Director

INVITATION FOR BIDS
CUC-IFB-19-028, REV.1

REPLACEMENT OF SADOG TASI WWTP CLARIFIER

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed bids from qualified firms for the Replacement of Sadog Tasi Clarifier Replacement in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The intent of the contract is for the Contractor to provide all labor, equipment, supplies and materials necessary to complete the scope of work which consists of installation of a new circular clarifier mechanism and replacement or repair of the effluent launder box; removal of the old circular clarifier mechanism and sections of the effluent launder box; replacement of the RFP weirs and scum baffle, installation of a new outer scum baffle; installation of new area lighting, wires, and conduit, and disconnect boxes; installation of a new process water spray system for foam control. The work shall include the dewatering and cleaning of aeration basin #3 and the clarifier; routing process flow and maintaining conditions during the construction period; and returning process flow from the aeration basin to the clarifier. The work shall be completed with minimal disruption to the daily operation of the Sadog Tasi Waste Water Treatment Plant. CUC requires the Project to be completed in 365 calendar days from date of award of contract.

The project is funded by a grant from the United States of Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). The award of this project is contingent upon receipt of approval for project award from USEPA.

Prospective Bidders must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The Bid Package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of \$100.00 (non-refundable) for one IFB package set.

A Pre-Bid Conference followed by site visits will be held on **March 12, 2020 at 10:00 AM (ChST)** at the CUC Main Conference Room, 3rd Floor, Room No. 17, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building.

One (1) Original and Five (5) Hard Copies of the bid MUST be submitted in a sealed envelope marked **"CUC-IFB-19-028, Rev.1 Replacement of the Sadog Tasi Clarifier"** to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, **no later than 10:00 AM (ChST) April 2, 2020**, at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Bids mailed via postal or courier service must be received on or before due date and time or post-marked before due date and time. Bid shall be submitted on the provided Bid Forms. Bidders are required to complete all Bid Forms. Bidders may supplement this form as appropriate. Bids will be required to be submitted under a condition of irrevocability for a period of 60 days after submission. Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered.

A Bid Guarantee of fifteen (15%) percent of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. A Payment Bond of one hundred (100%) percent and a Performance Bond of one hundred (100%) percent of the total bid price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful bidders. The Payment and Performance bond must be executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands or otherwise secured in a manner satisfactory to CUC, for the protection of all persons supplying labor and material to the contractor or its subcontractors for the performance of the work provided for in the contract. All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification shall be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). Bidders are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.

Bidders are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations. This Invitation for Bids does not commit CUC to the award of a contract or contracts, nor to pay any cost incurred in the preparation and submission of bids in anticipation of a contract. Bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a bid under the contract.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from registered Proponents and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 a.m. (ChST) on March 16, 2020** to Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Officer via email address manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Christie Sablan, CUC P&S, Purchasing Technician, Senior via email address christie.sablan@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids and waive any imperfection in the bid proposal in the best interest of the government. All bids shall become the property of CUC.

GARY P. CAMACHO
Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN, JR.
Purchasing Administrator

Masked man who punched cashier in rob try is arrested

Police arrested Friday night in Susupe the alleged masked man who punched a female cashier at a poker arcade in San Jose in an attempted robbery last March 22.

Michael Jordan Palacios Cabrera, 31, was brought before Superior Court Associate Judge Kenneth L. Govendo Monday on charges of attempted robbery, and assault and battery. Govendo imposed a \$50,000 cash bail.

Drug Enforcement Task Force officer Jesse Sablan stated in his report that a witness immediately identified Cabrera in a police photo lineup as he has seen the suspect frequently playing poker in another establishment.

The attempted robbery happened at the 888 Poker II near the former Payless ShoeSource along Chalan Monsignor Road in Oleai in the morning hours of March 22.

A video clip from a surveillance camera allegedly showed Cabrera knocking out the cashier with a single left-hand

punch. Cabrera allegedly failed to get any money because he accidentally pushed the door of the cashier's booth, closing it from the inside. The cashier could not help him open the booth as she was already unconscious after being punched.

Sablan said police officers responded and arrived at 888 Poker II around 6:53am in response to a call. Two callers informed police they were the ones who called for assistance.

One caller informed the officer that the cashier was lying on the floor inside the establishment and that the suspect had fled on foot toward Texas Road.

When the officers entered the establishment, they saw the cashier struggling to stand up. She was holding her head in pain. The officer stopped questioning the cashier as she appeared to be disoriented.

One of two callers informed the officer that when he walked inside 888 Poker to get hot water he saw the suspect standing

by the cashier booth's door.

The suspect told the witness (caller) to get out. The witness replied he was just going to get hot water.

As the witness walked toward the water dispenser, he observed the cashier lying on the floor and moaning in pain.

The witness said the suspect was trying to open the door of the cashier's booth. The suspect was yelling at the cashier to open the cashier's door. The witness said he got scared and walked out of the establishment.

The suspect then ran outside the establishment and crossed the street toward Texas Road.

Medical personnel then arrived, treated the cashier, and brought her to the hospital for further treatment.

Sablan said that during their interview with the victim last March 26, she stated that their security guard had already left at that time (6am) and that there was no customer inside. A few minutes later, the sus-

pect, wearing a white hospital mask and a hat, sat down and started playing poker. Several minutes later, the suspect called the cashier to cash out. The cashier took out \$150 and walked out of the cashier's booth. While the cashier inserted the keys into the poker machine to unlock it, the suspect punched her on the left side of her face. The cashier said she could only remember being punched and then blacked out.

Police got the footage of the surveillance camera and released it to the media.

Sablan said that they interviewed one of the witnesses last March 26, and the witness identified Cabrera in a photo lineup. The witness further stated that when he left the establishment, the suspect followed him. The suspect allegedly removed his mask and threatened the witness that he would kill him.

The witness told police that he does not know the suspect's name, but that he recognizes

him as he has seen him around Smile Poker in Chalan Laulau.

Last Oct. 17, police arrested Cabrera on charges of burglary and theft, assault and battery, and assault with a

dangerous weapon.

In May 2018, Cabrera, who was on probation at the time, was arrested for allegedly beating up his girlfriend. **(Ferdie De Las Torre)**

Access to American Memorial Park closed

In response to the Amendment to Directive 14 of the Second Executive Order 2020-04 issued by Gov. Ralph DLG Torres, all areas of the American Memorial Park are closed to encourage the residents of Saipan to comply with social distancing guidance in support of federal and local efforts to slow the spread of the novel coronavirus on our island.

Effective yesterday, March 31, 2020, all access points into American Memorial Park along pathways, roads, and parking areas were closed. The park will offer no services outside

those that support emergency visitor safety and resource protection. The marinas at Smiling Cove and Outer Cove are also closed by order of the governor. "We will notify the public when we resume full operations and provide updates on our website and social media channels," said the National Parks Service, which operates the park, in a notice yesterday.

The NPS encourages everyone to take advantage of the many digital tools already available to explore American Memorial Park. Check out its website (nps.gov/amme) and follow @americanmemorialpark. **(PR)**

USCIS to reuse biometrics

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services announced yesterday that it will reuse previously submitted biometrics in order to process valid Form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization, extension requests due to the temporary closure of Application Support Centers to the public in response to the coronavirus pandemic. This announcement is consistent with existing USCIS authorities regarding the agency's ability to reuse previously submitted biometrics.

Allow reuse of some biometrics

Applicants who had an appointment scheduled with an ASC on or after the March 18 closure or

who filed an I-765 extension will have their application processed using previously submitted biometrics. This will remain in effect until ASCs resume normal operations.

For more information

Education and precautions are the strongest tools against infection. Continue to practice good health habits, refrain from handshakes or hugs as greetings, and wash hands and clean surfaces appropriately.

USCIS will provide further updates as the situation develops and will continue to follow the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's guidance. Please visit uscis.gov/coronavirus for the latest facts and other USCIS updates. **(PR)**

CONGRESSIONAL ACTION

Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP) speaks on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives shortly before the vote on passage of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security, or "CARES" Act. Access to the House floor was limited to reduce risk of spreading the virus and members observed social distancing protocols throughout proceedings. Sablan achieved his top goals for the new law, including direct payments to the Commonwealth government for schools, healthcare, and other services, unemployment benefits for laid-off workers, and full participation in the national "recovery rebate" for taxpayers.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

April 1, 1999

Health eyes cuts to save jobs: Chief

The Department of Public Health is planning to carry out a seven-hour work per day schedule among the administrative staff since its budget for fiscal year 2000 has only been pegged at \$33.9 million. Public Health Secretary Kevin Villagomez said the amount to be saved in work hour reduction would be used in the purchase of medical supplies. "We have no choice but to live within our means because the economic situation only permits us to operate within this level. It is really going to be difficult for us to maintain a huge facility at a very low budget," he said. Eighty percent of the \$33.9 million budget will go to salaries of personnel alone while the remaining amount will be spent on operations.

Governor keeps hands off NMC

The Board of Regents of the Northern Marianas College will have a free hand in choosing the next leader for the Commonwealth's only higher learning institution following the retirement of President Agnes McPhetres in December. This assurance came from Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio who said that an official announcement will soon be published to invite candidates for the position. "I want to stress that the decision will come from

the Board," he said. The governor yesterday proclaimed April as NMC Month and commended the board for leading the second reorganization to ensure business as usual in its daily operations.

April 1, 2005

Board backs more family-oriented Garapan

The Saipan Zoning Board wants Garapan transformed into a more family-oriented, tourist-friendly area, according to its chairman, William Concepcion. The board met yesterday at the Coastal Resources Management office and determined that Garapan has too many massage parlors, adult-oriented bars and bookshops, and poker establishments, which the board believes are detrimental to its blueprint for the area. To alleviate the problem, the board agreed on a plan to survey the area to find out exactly how many of its tenants comply with the law on land use. The survey would, in turn, help the board identify establishments that should be retained in the Garapan revitalization plan. The board will be coordinating closely with Marianas Public Land Authority for a more effective zoning of Garapan, with CRM assisting in the cleanup.

Managaha landing fees eyed for MVA

Gov. Juan N. Babauta is pushing for a legislative action appropriating Managaha landing fees for the Marianas Visitors Authority. In a March 31, 2005 letter to Sen. Pete P. Reyes, chairman of the Saipan and Northern Island Legislative Delegation, Babauta said Managaha fees would supplement the budget needs of the authority. MVA, which receives some \$6 million in annual appropriation, is asking for a \$2-million sup-

plemental budget this fiscal year to boost its promotions of the Northern Marianas.

April 1, 2006

Saipan bug specimens sent to Guam

Specimens of the insect indigenous to Mexico called the papaya mealybug that have been found feasting on local papayas in a farm in As Teo are now being analyzed at the University of Guam laboratory. Northern Marianas College-Cooperative Research Extension and Education Services agriculture consultant Isidoro Cabrera confirmed yesterday that at least four samples of the insect have been forwarded to Guam through NMC's resident entomologist Joaquin Tenorio. Cabrera said the bugs are a great threat to the papaya industry if it spreads across the islands, especially to Rota and Tinian. He said the mealybug came from Guam because the papaya industry on that island was attacked by the same pest in 2003. Thus the possibility of affecting neighboring islands such as Rota is not a far-fetched idea.

Petron eyes fuel farm on Saipan

Top officials of Petron Corp. are set to arrive on Saipan next week to look at the possibility of putting up a fuel farm here, said Gov. Benigno R. Fitial Friday. Petron, the Philippines' leading oil refining and marketing company, is owned by the Philippine National Oil Company and Saudi Aramco, which is said to be the world's largest oil producer, each having a 40-percent share of equity. The remaining shares are owned by close to 200,000 individual stockholders and institutional investors.

DPS to enforce curfew hours for all CNMI residents

Pursuant to Directive 10 and Directive 16 of Second Amended Executive Order 2020-04 (CNMI Public Health Emergency Declaration) by Gov. Ralph DLG Torres, the CNMI Department of Public Safety will be strictly enforcing social gatherings of more than 10 people and the enhanced curfew hours for all CNMI residents, both adults and minors (under the age of 18) throughout the three municipalities of Saipan, Tinian and Aguiguan, and Rota.

Beginning last March 30, 2020, adults or minors caught loitering through any public streets, highways, roads, al-

leys, parks, public buildings, places of amusement, and entertainment, restaurants, cafes, and other eateries, or vacant lots and places within the three municipalities (Saipan, Tinian and Aguiguan, and Rota) during and between the hours of 7pm until 6am is subject to a penalty.

Only exceptions will include adults who are first responders, medical workers, law enforcement officers, and private sector employees on duty within the curfew hours, and minors who are accompanied by their parent, guardian, or an adult, who are in the direct route driving

and returning home, or who are lawfully employed during the hours specified.

Any person who violates these directives may be imprisoned for a period not to exceed 30 days, and up to 250 hours of community service.

Any adult or minor violating the provisions of this chapter may be given a citation or apprehended and may be lawfully detained, and appropriate proceedings may be instituted under and pursuant to the provisions of the juvenile court law as set forth in 6 CMC Section 5101 of the Commonwealth Code.

Any parent, guardian, or

GOVERNOR'S COVID-19 PUBLIC ADVISORY (AS OF MARCH 30, 2020)

Effective immediately, CNMI curfew hours will now be made applicable to all CNMI residents, including adults.

**ALL CNMI RESIDENTS MUST BE HOME BY
7:00 P.M.**

This does not apply to first responders, medical workers, law enforcement officers, and private sector employees on duty within the curfew hours.

This also does not apply to any person going to or returning from admission to the hospital or completion of medical treatment such as hemodialysis.

Violators will be subjected to penalties provided under the law.



COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION
GOVERNOR'S COVID-19 TASK FORCE



other adult person having the lawful custody, permanent or temporary, of any minor who suffers or permits or lets, either willfully or negligently, such minor to violate the provisions of this chapter shall be fined not more than \$750.

The Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and DPS highly advises the public to refrain from making unnecessary trips to public places.

Limit public exposure to grocery store trips and food pick-ups.

Your CNMI law enforcement officers and your government care for you and your family's wellbeing. **(PR)**

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

CHC updates visiting rules

Effective immediately, the Commonwealth Health Center will allow an expectant mother to identify a birthing partner who can be present in the delivery room with her during labor. However, after the baby is born, the birthing partner will be allowed a moment of physical contact with their newborn and will need to exit the labor and delivery area immediately. **(PR)**

Updated Bank of Hawaii hours

The Gualo Rai branch of Bank of Hawaii will open during the following hours:

- 9am – 10am: Monday - Saturday (man'āmkō hour)
- 9am – 4pm: Monday-Friday
- 9am – 1pm: Saturday. **(PR)**

Transfer station, landfill hours

The Department of Public Works has announced revised operation hours at the Lower Base Transfer Station and Marpi Landfill.

Beginning April 2, 2020, the Lower Base Transfer Station will be open all week from 7:30am to 1pm, except Wednesday. For more information, call (670) 322-2745 (Lower Base office)

Also, the Marpi Landfill will be open all week from 7:30am to 1pm, except Wednesday. For more information, call (670) 322-2761 (Marpi Landfill Office). **(PR)**

USCIS to continue processing employment authorization extension requests

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services has announced

that it will reuse previously submitted biometrics in order to process valid Form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization, extension requests due to the temporary closure of Application Support Centers response to the coronavirus pandemic. This announcement is consistent with existing USCIS authorities regarding the agency's ability to reuse previously submitted biometrics.

Applicants who had an appointment scheduled with an ASC on or after the March 18 closure or has filed an I-765 extension will have their application processed using previously submitted biometrics. This will remain in effect until ASCs are open for appointments to the public. **(PR)**

Rip currents seen until Thursday

The public is being warned

of a high risk of rip currents through Thursday afternoon along east facing reefs.

Based on the information received from the National Weather Service in Tiyan, Guam, and compiled at the CNMI Emergency Operations Center State Warning Point, there will be a persistent larger trade-wind swell the next several days. Breaking surf of 8 to 10 feet will continue to create dangerous rip currents along reef lines and exposed shorelines facing east.

Strong and frequent rip currents can pull even the best swimmer out to sea. Inexperience swimmers should stay out of the water. Strong rip currents will be life threatening along east facing reefs. If you become caught in a rip current, stay afloat while waiting for help. If you have to swim out of a rip current, swim parallel to shore and back toward the beach when possible.

Do not attempt to swim directly against a rip current as you will tire quickly. **(PR)**

Notice of suspension of programs

The CNMI Energy Division Office is temporarily suspending all program services for the Weatherization Assistance Program and the State Energy Program until further notice. The Division of Energy will announce additional information and updates on program services once office operations resume and return to normal. **(PR)**

Court closures

All Judiciary facilities will remain closed to the public up to and including Friday, April 3, 2020. During the closure, most Judiciary personnel are teleworking and emergency and essential court services may continue. Visit the Judiciary's

website at www.nmijudiciary.com for court information. For additional information or inquiries, contact Gretchen A. Smith, Esq., Clerk of Court, CNMI Supreme Court, at (670) 236-9715 or (670) 788-4363, or gretchen.smith@nmijudiciary.com or Patrick V. Diaz, Clerk of Court, CNMI Superior Court, at (670) 235-5248, (670) 783-8417, or patrick.diaz@nmijudiciary.com. **(PR)**

Women's Mini Expo, Women's Summit postponed

The Annual Women's Mini Expo and the CNMI Women's Summit, scheduled for March 24 and March 27 respectively have been postponed until further notice. The CNMI Women's Association shall remain closed until further notice. For assistance, call 285-8975 or email cwa.fogumoro@gmail.com. **(PR)**



LIMITED HOURS

Aisles at the Himawari store on Saipan appear deserted last Monday. The company said it is temporarily closing the adjacent restaurant starting today, April 1, "until further notice" and will have limited hours at the store itself.



KRIZEL TUAZON

Opinion

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

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Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP, 96950

Jayvee L. Vallejera EDITOR
editor@saipantribune.com

Mark Rabago ASSOCIATE EDITOR
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com

MEMBER

AP The Associated Press

Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Coronavirus postpones almost everything else in our lives. Best remedy? Patience

All signs pointed to the biggest sporting event on the planet becoming the best prescription for a world reeling from coronavirus malaise. In July, a world pummeled by the pandemic's physiological and psychological hurt would have watched in awe as 11,000 athletes from six continents marched through Tokyo's National Stadium during the 2020 Summer Olympics opening ceremonies.

It's an extravaganza brazen and bold enough to captivate and connect citizens around the globe, every four years. This year, it would have been beautiful therapy.

Alas, the pall of COVID-19 has put on ice so many aspects of what used to be the natural order of things. Baseball, hockey, basketball and soccer have all been suspended. The International Olympic Committee, together with Japan, relented to a chorus of calls from athletes and national Olympic committees—and announced on Monday a postponement of the Summer Olympics until July 23, 2021.

The Kentucky Derby and Indianapolis 500—also postponed, until later this summer.

Athletes such as Greco-Roman wrestler Joe Rau of Chicago have to put aside visions of Olympic greatness—and be patient. "I'm just relieved there is a decision and I can start figuring out what my next steps are going to be," Rau, 29, told the Tribune's Stacy St. Clair.

It's not just big sporting events that find themselves in a state of suspended animation. Our lives feel the same way. People who work at restaurants, hotels, shopping malls and the service industry feel caught between pre-coronavirus normalcy and whatever COVID-19 coda awaits us. Our health care workers are worried and exhausted. Our children, forced to study at home, find themselves in the same limbo.

How should we view this Middle-earth we're stuck in? Postponement is the compromise. It keeps alive the promise of an endpoint to a harrowing crisis that, so far, has yet to betray any glint of waning. It sidesteps the finality of outright cancellation—what was proposed and yearned for, but will never be.

But postponement, whether applied to the Olympics or the lives we once took for granted, demands no small amount of patience. Yes, the summer of 2021 is more than a year of waiting—an eon away for people around the world curious about the next Usain Bolt on the track or Michael Phelps in the pool.

The summer of 2021 will come, though, and whoever becomes the next Bolt will have a whole year to train and stretch and lift—and get faster.

Maybe we can take inspiration from those gymnasts, divers, runners and swimmers forced to put their dreams on hold, but who will use the extra time to find ways to shine more brightly, to be better at what they do. While coronavirus has us in this frozen state, we can seize this moment as a chance to better ourselves—be better friends, better neighbors, better human beings.

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A time to remember what we're missing

In the middle of March, when we first got a sense of how much would change because of the coronavirus, a friend joked, "I didn't plan on giving up this much for Lent."

It was a good line, but I didn't smile because things were getting depressing. No concerts. No parties. No going to bars and restaurants. No school. Small businesses were worried about their sales.

The "no" list kept getting longer. No beach. No bike trails. No haircuts. No zoo. No museums—so much for the "El Greco" exhibit at the Art Institute of Chicago. No spring break trip to see friends in St. Louis. No visits of any kind. Growing unemployment and shrinking 401(k)s.

We know why—we must try to contain the virus. We have to flatten the curve. We have to keep as many of us well for as long as possible, so there will be enough medical care to go around. Things are getting worse, and it's no time to complain about trivialities.

I know this, but can't help feeling grouchy and deprived of common pleasures. I feel like I'm 9 years old again, kicking the table leg in frustration because it's raining and I can't play softball. Every day and on and on.

For me, it really got bad when the Archdiocese of Chicago canceled Holy Week and Easter services. I'm a church musician—cantor and choir member—and we've been rehearsing for Holy Week since January. It's such beautiful music—"Pange Lingua Gloriosi" and "Were You There?"—pieces we sing just once a year.

I'll also miss so many other things about Easter time, which is better than Christmas because it's spring and you don't have to stress about presents. We'll miss braiding palm branches and bringing the Easter basket to church for a Holy Saturday blessing, a Polish tradition. I remember as a kid competing with my siblings over who could decorate the prettiest eggs that would be good enough to go in the basket, along with the rye bread, horseradish, a ring of kielbasa and the butter molded into the shape of a lamb, all covered with my grandmother's embroidered cloth. Then there would be a giant family party on Easter with an egg hunt and lamb cakes. Not this year.

I know there are worse things. People are suffering and dying by the thousands around the world. Health care workers are going without necessary equipment and getting sick themselves.

But you never know what's going to trip your own emotional wire, and losing Easter was the first thing in these past few weird weeks that made me cry and cry.

By MARY WISNIEWSKI

Chicago Tribune

Mary Wisniewski is the Chicago Tribune transportation reporter.



Eventually, you have to stop crying and figure out what to do next. So I decided to think about the pandemic lockdown as a giant, extended version of Lent. A solemn, global Sabbath. A cosmic boot in our collective pants.

Lent, which started Feb. 26 for non-Orthodox Christians, is 40 days of contemplation, penance and fasting, a slowing down of ordinary life. Catholics and followers of some other Christian traditions give up meat on Fridays and let go of some personal pleasure. Over the years, I've given up chocolate, Facebook, salt, coffee and reading fiction. I remember one year, my friends all gave up alcohol at the same time, and we had a sober late March birthday party, grimly drinking O'Doul's.

Many religious traditions have some kind of fasting ritual, whether it's Lent or Yom Kippur or Ramadan. While the types of fast differ, the sacrifice serves as a reminder both of the presence of God and of all our blessings. Seeing a dish of candy, and not taking one, is a spiritual pinprick, a way to both recall the transcendent and the sufferings of the poor.

This is what's happening with everyone now, religious and nonreligious, all over the world. By not being able to get together with our friends and family, we are reminded of how much we love them and how much we may have taken them for granted. If we are sick, we are reminded of how good it is to be well. Unable to go where we like, we remember how precious that freedom is.

I also find myself grateful for what I do have now—the walks around the neighborhood with my daughter, spotting bears and rainbows in windows. I'm grateful for the phone and Zoom chats with family, and that a friend with the virus is out of the hospital and getting better. I'm grateful for the chilly spring sunshine, my house, my job, water, heat, enough toilet paper and my own health. Touch wood. So far.

I'm hoping for those of us who come out of this, when coronavirus-Lent is over, we'll value what we have a little more. Perhaps summer will be sweeter, because spring was so long and sad.

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Pipinu` Na Sagu

Pipinu` i coronavirus na sagu! Pot este na man-masoyu` todou na u fa`naga gi gima`. Este un` manera `nai si`na ta pribeni machalapun un` pipinu` na sagu! Oppan na otden gi enteru i tanu` (elmundu). Ni mediku timatu`ngu haf` este na chenut. Pa`gu matututuhun ma-estudiaye haf` tinatte`na na pipinu`. I chenut ha saguaniye hanum i godes `nai chinema` humagu`ng i tautau estake dimalas. Tai amot na sagu! Mas ke 18,000 esta man-pininu` ya sige ha` ma-umenta diariu. Esta guaha 414,277 na tautau man-tinatme mientras 100,000-mas esta man-pininu`. Dios mihu na dadau chenut. `Nos kuantus estadu giya America matutuhun mahatsan mas hospitat pot ma-ekspepekta na lamagei siempre umana` fa`naga pot man-tinatme nu este na sagu. Kontra gofes `nai makat i tau-tau humagu`ng. Mansuette hit sa` taya` nu este na pesti guine. Puede ti ha fagoigue hit i chenut pot pipinu`. Este na asunto ha papa`ngun hit gi bandan preparasion. Mu`nga

na u fatoigue hit un` chenut `sino ira ya ha lachai muna` fangali-leg hit gi halum fache` diskuidu.

Agradesimientu

Gi iran pipinu` na sagun coronavirus mangaige giya monana para u fan man-ayuda i mediku, infetmera, yan polisia gi haf` na gotpe pot nesessidat tautau-ta siha. Sin dition machogue che`chu` niha gi maseha haf` na inigu`ng. Gi mismu tiempu siempre u bira siha tatte gi gima` dispues de todou. Kau makikilili` chenut ni unabes `nai ma`neha gi offisiun niha. Makat na obligasion ya hu nana`e kada unu Si Yuus Maase` pot sensian ayudu yan binatbaru pot tautau-ta. Puede ni unu u in-affekta chenut `an ha bira siha tatte gi gima` dispues de finagpu` cho`chu`

Asuntu

Diariu hu baba i Internet manaitai gaseta siha. Dos papet hu a`ngoghu: Washington Times yan Japan Times. Suffisiente gas-etan enteru elmundu yan man-analisau na asunto siha. Hu pupulan relasion nasion siha giya Asia yan Japon. Mien-tras mauleg kinalamten industrian niha deste ne`kanu` yan otu siha trastes, kontentuyu`. Atbansau Japon gi megai siha na asun-tu. Kada nasion lokue` guaha na patte `nai fuetsudu. Puede u fattu ha`anen Kinahulu` Jesukristo (Easter) gi hilu` felis yan namagof na selebrasion para todou ma`ngilisyau. Makat na karera pot tafagcha`e tiempun ha`ilas. Mauleg tapan ma-maisen ayudu ginen i Saina para hinemlu` unu yan todou.

Karera

Hu e` eku`ngug kau guaha nuebu na programan adelantu para i tautau-ta siha. Taya`! Adahe na man-hine`nga`ng i tropan hegsu` I Deni` ni mattirun un` pipinu` na sagu. Mamaisen si Kilili` yan gobietnu ayudu ginen as Presidente Trump ayudu `an halu`nu hit i maribahan ekonomia guine. Menus kopble yan cho`chu` `an ha palo`pu` hit mas chatsaga na kinalatem ekonomia guine. Gi hilu` animu puede ti mattu i sagun coronavirus mage Marianas.

Lugat

Chathu`ngug i amigu hu Magu pot lugat `nai ha mafa`nagu i che-nut Coronavirus era giya Wuhan. Ileleg`na `Luhan`. Huna` di-nanche dispues lau ai na manadan chaleg pot luhan. Buente pot pipinu` ayu na sagu na ha tatpa`nge `luhan`. Dispues ha akonseha-yu` pot umeku`ngug, `Este guatu (guahu) ha eku`ngug este mage (guiya) a`paire todou`. Hu faisen haf` hi-nasso`na pot sagun coronavirus, ileg`na, `A` taya`, a`suha `alo`lu` este mage`. Hu infotma na taya` este na sagu guine. Ha fueguyu` tatte, `Mu`nga `afa` ediku (mediku) hau`. De dios!

This is not sustainable

Countries have experienced economic depressions before, but not usually as a matter of choice. The nationwide coronavirus shutdowns over the past three weeks have ground parts of the country to a halt. We have probably never before in our history seen so much economic activity vaporize so quickly—within days or even hours. The Great Depression and the panics of the 19th century are the only possible analogues. Goldman Sachs is forecasting a 24% drop in quarterly GDP. Morgan Stanley is anticipating a 30% decline. These are the top-line numbers of a vastation that will throw millions out of work, stress families and blight personal lives, destroy the dreams of small-business owners and bankrupt industries. This is a tale of human misery, not just of declines in the stock market and in GDP. The federal government can alleviate some of the damage, but even the biggest, best-designed stimulus bill is no substitute for shuttered storefronts and factories. And how many times can Washington pass \$2 trillion bills? No, this is not sustainable, nor will people stand for it except as a temporary expedient. President Donald Trump is already expressing impatience with his own guidance against gatherings of more than 10 people for the next 15 days. If that sentiment is understandable, it'd be foolish to give up on the lockdowns before they have much of a chance to, in the cliché of the hour, flatten the curve. If the disease had been left unchecked, it would have exacted an enormous price, in lives of the infected, in the break-down of the hospital system, in the follow-on effects on people ill with conditions that would have gone untreated. No matter how bad today's lockdowns are, imagine if we decided to undertake them at a time when the U.S. already had a mil-

By JOHN S. DELROSARIO JR.
Special to the Saipan Tribune



John DelRosario Jr. is a former publisher of the Saipan Tribune and a former secretary of the Department of Public Lands. All views expressed by the author are his/her own and do not necessarily reflect the opinion and stance of the Saipan Tribune.

Atlíbes

Guaha dos lahihu `nietu na sumen atlíbes kustumbren niha. I unu geftau i otu prefektu Judeus. Huli`e na i segundu debi bai adi`ngane pot para bai komprende ginen mamanu kustumbren miskinu. `Nai hu kuentuse ha apunta na `osungue` machuleguan sin mafaisen ni propiadat`na. Hu komprende pot patgon ya geftau gi mismu tiempu. Hu fana`gue chochogue`na `nai libianu ha gana respetun todou. Bai rikonose dispues haf` adelanto`na mamatinas fitme na dispo-sision `nai ma-establese respetu achog entalu` che`lu.

Bisiu

I man-ayuda otu ni munesessita assistimientu ti maput ta kubre pot nesessidat. Lau taimanu un` justifika umayau `nai taya an-imu-mu man-espiha cho`chu`? Taimanu un` nana`lu inayauumu `nai ni cho`chu` hau taya`? Haf` mohon?

Lisayu

Mientras mamange`yu` huhu`ngug gi radio tinayuyot lisayu. Hu hu-chum matahu manayuyot dispues `nai hu kontinua haf` hututuge`. Tatnai fatta bisitasion espirituat pot estague` a`nklan ha`anihu diariamente. Ni u pagyu gi halum manloka` napu fitme karerahu para i puettu ni hu aliligau. Tatmas tra`nkilu na sentimentu ke fitme na galaide` espirituat. Lokue`, diariu hu tayuyute maseha haye na kilisyau ni ma-dispone ni mattu gi hinassog-hu. Guiya este mafanana`an indu-thensia para ayu i manmofo`na ke hita. Na geftau hau sa` ti un` fali`ngu gi kareramu. Finu` man-amku` haf` humuyuy`ng gi agapa` u ta`lu tatte gi akague.

Li`nguahe

Hu ega` un` programan Chamoru gi television `nai todou umu`usa finu` E`nglis. Guaha `nai mana` fan man-hassu i man-e`ega` na programan Chamoru lau makontinua manfinu` E`nglis. Anog na ti matu`ngu li`nguahen niha ni tampoku haf` masasa`ngan. Kase guahu i tatamudu pot hu e`eku`ngug tai sustansia na programa!

By RICH LOWRY
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Rich Lowry is editor of the National Review.

lion cases and the health care system was in deep crisis. Our aim should be to shift from the blunderbuss solution of mass shutdowns to rifle-shot remedies, on the model of what South Korea has done with its widespread testing (although it has much more favorable conditions as a smaller, more cohesive country with an outbreak centered on one church). We should focus on the production of tests, ventilators, masks and other protective gear on an industrial scale. Whatever the government has to spend or do to get it done should happen—just as if we were on a wartime footing. The first priority should obviously be backstopping the hospital system and protecting front-line medical workers. But, as economists Paul Romer and Alan M. Garber argue, we need to widen out from there to create a system of population-wide testing and the distribution of protective gear to workers interacting with the public to protect against the spread, while allowing for ordinary work. This regimen would depend on innovation—cheaper, faster tests, etc.—but that is surely within our power with enough will and resources. Then, we could begin to return to normal with much less risk, even if vulnerable populations and metropolitan hot spots still require extraordinary precautions. Whatever path we take will be costly and have its downsides. All we can know with certainty is that the current path is untenable.

LITERARY NOOK
By JOEY 'PEPE BATBON' CONNOLLY
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Joey "Pepe Batbon" Connolly is a retired teacher and poet living on Tinian who taught English in CNMI public schools for the past 30 years. He has also taught in Alaska, New Orleans, and Las Vegas.

D.R.E.A.M.S. Sonnets

To celebrate National Poetry Month in April I am inaugurating a new series of poems titled D.R.E.A.M.S., an acrostic for "Dream: Reality, Enigma, ATP (adenosine triphosphate), Meaning: Sonnets." Tweeter Tales is on hiatus during the COVID-19 crisis and before the Nov. 2020 election. I also stopped it a month or so before the 2016 U.S .presidential election. T.O.A.S.T. will continue from time to time. I hope the poems will provide some entertainment and distraction from the COVID-19 crisis. Wash your hands and give "air high-fives" from 6 feet away. Happy April Fool's Day from Jose Connolly aka Pepe Batboon on April 7, a Full Pink Moon aka a Full Fish Moon coming soon.






Dream Streams Between COVID-19

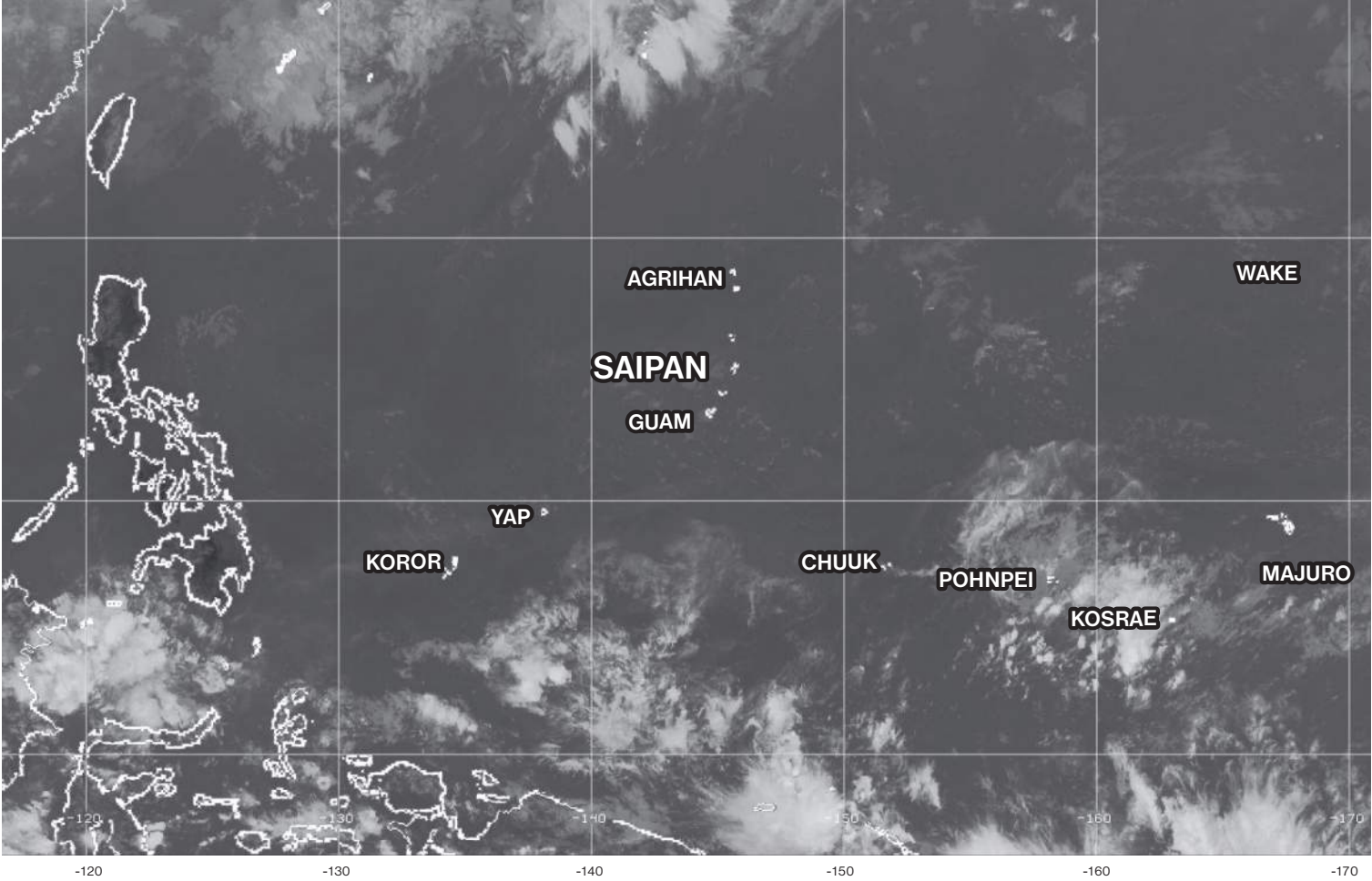
When you've reached your peak this round after your trip spread and turned total global on what animal and human lungs will you pound in your studded soccer like ball cell ignoble? in what countries hide? what four legged creature will you inhabit? gecko? rat? goat, pig,or rabbit ? will your shape mutate and have a new feature? will your symptoms retain the same former habit? will you favor cold? be scarce near the equator? will we have a vaccine ready for those who want? will you weaken so less will need an inhalator? or still make it difficult to breathe as elders pant? will you mutate sooner or later into COVID 2020? will Vegas bookies give high odds or even money?

Tinian Open Vegas Closed Virus Posed

I am old and uneasy under budding trees inside the neurotic city unhappy as mud the night sky shows off Jupiter and satellites time lets me enjoy it the Vegas Strip below still glowing despite the COVID 19 shutdown my seven minute sonnets pop up like popcorn I'm honored to be Tinian island's poet laureate but laurels and praise belong to the good people there good cowfoot soup, reef fish grilled over tangantangan on the limestone trail flame trees orange carpet walking across wet sand to the next pocket beach now self isolation in a city sin has temporarily left gone with cautionary measures for all concerned I say a prayer the virus passes by the entire CNMI.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN									
WEDNESDAY		THURSDAY		FRIDAY		SATURDAY		SUNDAY	
									
Partly cloudy with isolated showers.		Partly cloudy with isolated light showers.		Partly cloudy with isolated light showers.		Partly cloudy with isolated light showers.		Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.	
88°	77°	80°	70°	80°	70°	80°	70°	80°	70°
YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE									



PICTURE TIME: 11:10 AM, TUESDAY, MARCH 31, 2020
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Partly cloudy skies with isolated showers and moderate to fresh trade winds prevail across the Marianas this morning. Latest buoy readings show seas between 6 and 8.5 feet.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA ▲ ▼ °F		
Guam and Rota	Partly Cloudy	87° / 77°
Palau	Partly Cloudy	86° / 78°
Yap	Partly Cloudy	86° / 79°
Chuuk	Isolated Thunderstorms	87° / 81°
Pohnpei	Scat Thunderstorms	85° / 79°
Kosrae	Scat Thunderstorms	85° / 79°
Majuro	Thunderstorms	83° / 80°

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Wednesday	6:12 AM	6:29 PM
Thursday	6:11 AM	6:29 PM
Friday	6:11 AM	6:29 PM
Saturday	6:10 AM	6:29 PM
Sunday	6:09 AM	6:29 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	12:11 AM	11:43 AM
Wedneesay	-	1:06 AM	12:39 PM
Thursday	-	2:01 AM	1:38 PM
Friday	-	2:54 AM	2:39 PM
Saturday	-	3:46 AM	3:41 PM

AROUND THE GLOBE ▲ ▼ °F		
Auckland	Sunny	72° / 59°
Beijing	Partly Cloudy	70° / 39°
Hong Kong	Mostly Cloudy	75° / 70°
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	80° / 68°
London	Partly Cloudy	52° / 39°
Los Angeles	Sunny	75° / 57°
Manila	Partly Cloudy	95° / 79°
Melbourne	Showers	70° / 57°
Miami	Showers	86° / 69°
New York	Partly Cloudy	55° / 38°
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	57° / 43°
Paris	Sunny	55° / 34°
Busan	Partly Cloudy	63° / 45°
Rome	Sunny	57° / 36°
Salem	Thunderstorms	68° / 43°
San Francisco	Sunny	57° / 44°
Seoul	Mostly Cloudy	63° / 36°
Tokyo	Mostly Sunny	63° / 45°
Washington, DC	Mostly Cloudy	58° / 41°

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY FEET		
2:11 AM	HIGH TIDE	1.57
7:19 AM	LOW TIDE	1.24
11:55 AM	HIGH TIDE	1.56
7:43 PM	LOW TIDE	0.06

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NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.net

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF MARCH 26, 2020			
DEPARTURES			
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)			
UA117	9:15am	9:55am	1, 4, 6, 7
ARRIVALS			
GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN			
UA174	7:30am	8:11am	1, 4, 6, 7
LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. <i>(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)</i>			

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.			
SAIPAN TO ROTA			
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1301	7:30AM	8:00AM	Daily
1302	11:30AM	12:00PM	Daily
1303	4:00PM	4:30PM	Daily
ROTA TO SAIPAN			
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3101	8:15AM	8:45AM	Daily
3102	1:45PM	2:15PM	Daily
3103	4:45PM	5:15PM	Daily
ROTA TO GUAM			
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3401	12:15PM	12:45PM	Daily
GUAM TO ROTA			
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
4301	1:00PM	1:30PM	Daily

SAIPAN TO TINIAN			
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1201	7:00AM	7:15AM	Daily
1202	8:00AM	8:15AM	Daily
1203	9:00AM	9:15AM	Daily
1204	10:00AM	10:15AM	Daily
1205	11:00AM	11:15AM	Daily
1206	12:00PM	12:15PM	Daily
1207	1:00PM	1:15PM	Daily
1208	2:00PM	2:15PM	Daily
1209	3:00PM	3:15PM	Daily
1210	4:00PM	4:15PM	Daily
1211	5:00PM	5:15PM	Daily
1212	6:00PM	6:15PM	Daily

TINIAN TO SAIPAN			
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
2102	7:30AM	7:45AM	Daily
2103	8:30AM	8:45AM	Daily
2104	9:30AM	9:45AM	Daily
2105	10:30AM	10:45AM	Daily
2106	11:30AM	11:45AM	Daily
2107	12:30PM	12:45PM	Daily
2108	1:30PM	1:45PM	Daily
2109	2:30PM	2:45PM	Daily
2110	3:30PM	3:45PM	Daily
2111	4:30PM	4:45PM	Daily
2112	5:30PM	5:45PM	Daily
2113	6:30PM	6:45PM	Daily

Business

Gas is cheap, but for many motorists there's nowhere to go



Julio DeJesus pumps gas for 98.9 cents a gallon, Monday, March 30, 2020, in Cleveland.

AP

DALLAS (AP)—U.S. gasoline prices have dropped to their lowest levels in four years, and they are almost sure to go lower as oil prices plunge.

Price-tracking services put the national average Monday around \$2 a gallon. Some stations were spotted charging under a dollar.

But don't expect a stampede to the pumps. Demand is weak because so many Americans are under shelter-in-place rules and businesses have been shuttered because of the coronavirus outbreak.

"For most Americans who are home practicing social distancing and not driving to

work or taking their children to school, you are only filling up maybe once a week, maybe every couple of weeks," said Jeanette Casselano, a spokeswoman for the AAA auto club. "You are not reaping the benefits."

Prices have plenty of room to keep falling—maybe below \$1.50, according to analysts.

Patrick DeHaan, an analyst for price tracker GasBuddy, said that eventually retail prices will reflect the even faster decline in wholesale prices.

"Retailers are taking their time lowering prices because they have a lot of uncertainty around the corner," DeHaan said, adding that the practice

boosts service station profit margins. "We've never seen gasoline retailers doing as well as they are now."

Investors expect weak demand to continue pushing gasoline prices lower. Contracts in New York for gasoline futures plunged to well under \$1 a gallon on Monday.

Oil accounts for about half the price of gasoline, and the drop at the pump is shadowing the steep slide in crude, which briefly on Monday hit the lowest levels since 2002. Benchmark prices for U.S. and international crude have both fallen by more than half in the past five weeks, as more

Americans and Europeans have come under lockdown, cutting into demand for oil, and Saudi Arabia and Russia engaged in a price war.

Falling prices is likely to lead to less production in the Permian Basin of west Texas and New Mexico and other U.S. oilfields. Chevron is cutting back spending in the Permian, where shale drilling turned the U.S. into the world's biggest oil producer.

AAA put Monday's national average for gasoline at \$2.01 a gallon, down from \$2.69 a year ago. GasBuddy said it was \$1.99. Both were within 20 cents of price lows set in early

2016 and late 2008, according to government figures.

The cheapest prices are in a swath of the country from Texas to Wisconsin and Mich-

igan, with most states in that band averaging under \$1.77 a gallon. At the other end were California, at \$3.06, and Hawaii, \$3.36 on average.

Meet Eric Yuan, the man who made your Zoom meetings possible

If you hadn't already heard have of Zoom Video Communications, there is a decent chance you've made its acquaintance over the past few weeks.

Millions of people are now working from home as part of the intensifying fight against the coronavirus outbreak. In addition to using the video conference for work, many are also tapping it to hold virtual playdates for their kids and virtual happy hours with friends and family banned from gathering in public places.

The crisis has cast a spotlight on Zoom, a company founded nine years ago by its CEO Eric Yuan after he defected from Cisco Systems and took about 40 engineers with him. He wanted to refine a concept he first dreamed up during the 1990s as a college student in China, when he dreaded the 10-hour train trips to see his then-girlfriend, now his wife.

Now Zoom is booming, just 11 months after it made its debut on the stock market. While the Standard & Poor's 500 index has fallen by 25% since its record high on Feb. 19, Zoom's stock has soared 46% as investors bet on its service becoming a mainstream staple in life after the coronavirus.

Yuan, 50, recently spoke to The Associated Press during an interview conducted on Zoom. The conversation has been edited for clarity and length.

Q: Are these strange times providing a glimpse at how we are going to be working and living in the future?

A: I hope this crisis can be over very, very soon, but one one thing I know for sure is that companies will learn this is the way to work. I am pretty sure almost every company will be thinking about it and say, "Hey, maybe working from home makes sense," and maybe let every employee work from home, maybe once a week. Previously, a lot of businesses didn't even want to try.

Q: Do you think we will find out that people can be more productive at home?

A: It's too early to tell whether it's more productive or less productive, at least for me. I am finding I have even more meetings, and every day I miss the lunch time, so I am also learning how to adapt to all this working from home.

Q: Zoom primarily has been used by businesses. Are you discovering new social applications now that people are using it to virtually hang out too?

A: That is not our intention. But kids are pretty smart, they always figure out new use cases. There are some very cool consumer use cases. For now, I am just telling my team and reminding myself this is a very critical time because we are in a crisis. So we are focusing on two things: To serve our existing customers and make sure our service is always great quality and is always up. The second thing is how can we help the local community, like the K-12 schools, handle this crisis. Anything else, I told our team, that's just a distraction.

Q: Zoom's stock has been soaring while most of the market has been plunging. How are you managing that?

A: It's good that I am 50 now. If you had asked me this question when I was 25, I would tell you, "Yes, we are very excited about the stock price!" But, now, seriously, I can tell you the truth, it doesn't matter. So the stock is up, it's good for our investors. If it's down, we keep working hard. I really do not focus on the stock price.

Q: Do you still see personal, physical interaction as an important element in society?

A: I think for the foreseeable future, that's absolutely right. We still haven't been able to have cool features like a virtual hug that you can actually feel. We talk about that, but we don't have that. Or when you drink tea or coffee, with one click you can digitize a smell. Those features will be available with AR (augmented reality) technology, but for now it's too early. That's why you have to have the personal interactions. (AP)

Some Instacart, Amazon workers strike as jobs get riskier

NEW YORK (AP)—Some Instacart and Amazon warehouse workers walked off the job Monday demanding greater safeguards against the coronavirus, even as both companies are speed-hiring hundreds of thousands of new workers to handle a surge in delivery orders.

The one-day strikes had little impact on consumers, but the unrest called attention to mounting discontent among low-wage workers who are on the front lines of the pandemic, serving the needs of those who can keep safe working from home. Whole Worker, a workers group for Whole Foods employees, is calling for a nationwide "sick out" on Wednesday.

Many workers in high demand are part-time or contracted employees, lacking in benefits such as paid sick time off or health care. In addition to demands for more protection

against coronavirus, workers are citing longstanding grievances over practices that keep wages low and part-time workers from getting more hours.

Online grocery-delivery service Instacart and Amazon say they are working to equip their workers with sanitation gear and have taken steps to increase pay and extend paid sick time. Instacart said Sunday that it would make hand sanitizer available to its workers upon request and outlined changes to its tip system, but strikers said it was too little too late.

"They need to give us hazard pay right now and it should be guaranteed," said Shanna Foster, a single mother who stopped working her Instacart gig two weeks ago out of fear of contracting the virus. "It wasn't worth the risk."

But a rush of hiring is likely to dilute any attempts by existing workers to organize

walk-offs. Many people are applying for the new jobs as layoffs surge in restaurants, retail, hospitality, airports and other industries that have shut down. Nearly 3.3 million Americans applied for unemployment benefits last week, almost five times the previous record set in 1982.

While many Instacart workers said they would stop taking orders Monday, other, newer workers were reluctant to give up a source of income at a time of mass layoffs.

"I'm grateful to have some way to make money," said Summer Cooper, 39, who started working as an Instacart shopper in the Tampa Bay, Florida, area recently after losing her position as a server at a hotel restaurant.

San Francisco-based Instacart said it is nearing its goal of hiring 300,000 more workers—more than doubling its work-

force—to fulfill orders it says have surged by 150% over last year's levels in the past weeks.

In the past week, Instacart said 250,000 people have signed up to work as full-service shoppers—"gig" workers who make multiple trips a day to groceries stores to get and deliver groceries that people order on its app. The company said about 50,000 of those workers have actually started shopping.

It said the strike had no impact on its operations Monday, with 40% more shoppers using its platform compared to the same day last week.

Instacart workers are demanding \$5 in hazard pay per order and a tip default on the app to at least 10%. The company instead announced Sunday that it would change the tip default to the amount last paid by the client, saying workers are seeing a surge in tips amid the pandemic.

Nation

‘Please come help us’: New York begs for medical workers

NEW YORK (AP)—New York’s governor urgently appealed for medical volunteers Monday amid a “staggering” number of coronavirus deaths, as he and health officials warned that the crisis unfolding in New York City is just a preview of what other U.S. communities could soon face.

“Please come help us in New York now,” Gov. Andrew Cuomo said as the state’s death toll climbed by more than 250 people in a day to a total of over 1,200, most of them in the city. He said an additional 1 million health care workers are needed to tackle the crisis.

“We’ve lost over 1,000 New Yorkers,” Cuomo said. “To me, we’re beyond staggering already. We’ve reached staggering.”

Even before the governor’s appeal, close to 80,000 former nurses, doctors and other professionals were stepping up to volunteer, and a Navy hospital ship, also sent to the city after 9/11, had arrived with 1,000 beds to relieve pressure on overwhelmed hospitals.

“Whatever it is that they need, I’m willing to do,” said Jerry Kops, a musician and former nurse whose tour with the show Blue Man Group was abruptly halted by the outbreak.

He returned to his Long Island home, where he volunteered to be a nurse again. While waiting to be reinstated,



The Navy hospital ship USNS Comfort arrives in New York, Monday, March 30, 2020.

AP

Kops has been helping at an assisted-living home near his house in Shirley, N.Y.

The spike in deaths in New York was another sign of the long fight ahead against the global pandemic, which was filling Spain’s intensive care beds and shutting millions of Americans inside even as the crisis in China, where the outbreak began in December, kept easing.

More than 235 million people—about two of every three Americans—live in the 33 states where governors have declared statewide orders or recommendations to stay home.

In California, officials put out a similar call for medical volunteers as coronavirus hospitalizations doubled over the last four days and the number of patients in in-

tensive care tripled.

“Challenging times are ahead for the next 30 days, and this is a very vital 30 days,” President Donald Trump told reporters. “The more we dedicate ourselves today, the more quickly we will emerge on the other side of the crisis.”

In Europe, meanwhile, hard-hit Italy and Spain saw their death tolls climb by more than 800 each, but the World

Health Organization’s emergency chief said cases there were “potentially stabilizing.” At the same time, he warned against letting up on tough containment measures.

“We have to now push the virus down, and that will not happen by itself,” Dr. Michael Ryan said.

More than three-quarters of a million people worldwide have become infected and

over 37,000 have died, according to a count by Johns Hopkins University.

The U.S. reported more than 160,000 infections and over 3,000 deaths, with New York City the nation’s worst hot spot. New Orleans, Detroit and other cities also had alarming clusters.

“Anyone who says this situation is a New York City-only situation is in a state of denial,” Cuomo said. “You see this virus move across the state. You see this virus move across the nation. There is no American who is immune to this virus.”

Some hospitals are now parking refrigerated trailers outside their doors to collect the dead. At two Brooklyn hospitals, videos posted by bystanders and a medical employee showed workers in masks and gowns loading bodies onto trailers from gurneys on the sidewalk.

Dr. Anthony Fauci, the U.S. government’s top infectious-disease expert, also warned that smaller cities are likely about to see cases “take off” the way they have in New York City.

“What we’ve learned from painful experience with this outbreak is that it goes along almost on a straight line, then a little acceleration, acceleration, then it goes way up,” he said on ABC’s “Good Morning America.”

School shutdowns raise stakes of digital divide for students

WINNSBORO, S.C. (AP)—Students struggling to get online in a rural South Carolina county received a boost last week with the arrival of six buses equipped with Wi-Fi, some of the hundreds the state has rolled out since schools were closed by the coronavirus outbreak.

With routers mounted inside, the buses broadcast enough bandwidth in an area the size of a small parking lot for parents to drive up and children to access the internet from inside their cars. One of the buses set up outside the apartment complex of Lacheyle Moore, who had been limiting her own usage to leave enough data on her cellphone plan for her daughter’s schoolwork.

“I have to put extra data on my phone to make sure her work gets done, so she can get graded for it,” said Moore, who works as a cashier and shifted her schedule to help instruct her two children.

The pandemic that launched a massive, unplanned experiment with distance learning has created extraordinary hurdles

for schoolchildren left behind by the digital divide. School districts and governments are now racing to give the millions of U.S. students without home internet a chance of keeping up.

Nationwide, nearly 3 million students make do without home internet because of the high costs of service and gaps in its availability. The disadvantaged students are more likely to be students of color, from low-income families or in households with lower parental education levels.

The nation’s largest school districts, including Los Angeles and New York, are spending millions of dollars to provide devices and internet connections for students. Smaller districts are finding ways to boost wireless internet in school parking lots and distribute hot spots. Still, others are sticking with paper assignments and books because the digital equity issues are too much to overcome.

“What we’re seeing is a widening of the achievement gap, so that children who are in well-funded districts were able

to immediately pivot to online learning strategies, because the infrastructure was already in place,” said Maura McInerney, legal director of the Education Law Center, which advocates for disadvantaged students. “In sharp contrast, underfunded districts, who did not have these resources and their children do not have access to Chromebooks, for example, are scrambling to address the educational needs of students.”

In Fairfield County, South Carolina, 51% of households have no broadband internet access, according to an Associated Press analysis of census data. Nationwide, an estimated 18% of U.S. students do not have home access to broadband internet.

“Lots of mothers and fathers are really not equipped to be home school parents,” said J.R. Green, the school superintendent.

Across South Carolina, hundreds of buses were requested by school districts in a program targeting low-income and rural areas, state education spokesman Ryan Brown said. The

state was ready to equip thousands of buses, but Brown said that service providers’ offers of low-cost and even free service plans has lessened the demand.

So deep are the equity challenges for the Philadelphia School District that it initially prohibited online instruction during the shutdown. Only about half the district’s high school students have a laptop or tablet and home internet service. As schools now appear likely to be closed for longer than anticipated, the district plans to buy 50,000 Chromebooks and begin online instruction by mid-April.

Comcast, which is based in the city, has raised speeds on its \$10-a-month “Internet Essentials” plan for low-income families and offered two months of free service to new customers.

“We have the \$10 internet (plan). It’s not for doing lessons, cause it’s really slow. If we needed to do the Google classroom, we would need, I think, the regular internet, which I can’t afford,” parent Cecelia Thompson, 54, said earlier this month.

New Trump mileage standards to gut Obama climate effort

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Donald Trump is poised to roll back ambitious Obama-era vehicle mileage standards and raise the ceiling on damaging fossil fuel emissions for years to come, gutting one of the United States’ biggest efforts against climate change.

The Trump administration is expected to release a final rule Tuesday on mileage standards through 2026. The change—making good on the rollback after two years of Trump threatening and fighting states and a faction of automakers that opposed the move—waters down a tough Obama mileage standard that would have encouraged automakers to ramp up production of electric vehicles and more fuel-efficient gas and diesel vehicles.

“When finalized, the rule will benefit our economy, will improve the U.S. fleet’s fuel economy, will make vehicles more affordable, and

will save lives by increasing the safety of new vehicles,” EPA spokeswoman Corry Schiermeyer said Monday, ahead of the expected release.

Opponents contend the change—gutting his predecessor’s legacy effort against climate-changing fossil fuel emissions—appears driven by Trump’s push to undo regulatory initiatives of former President Barack Obama, and say even the administration has had difficulty pointing to the kind of specific, demonstrable benefits to drivers, public health and safety or the economy that normally accompany standards changes.

The Trump administration says the looser mileage standards will allow consumers to keep buying the less fuel-efficient SUVs that U.S. drivers have favored for years. Opponents say it will kill several hundred more Americans a year through dirtier air, compared to the Obama standards.



Indian migrant laborers wait for buses provided by the government to transport them to their hometowns, following a lockdown amid concern over spread of coronavirus in New Delhi, India, Saturday, March 28, 2020.

India marshals more resources to stop virus, but gaps remain

NEW DELHI (AP)—India is adding more resources to tackle its increase in coronavirus cases by announcing that private hospitals may be requisitioned to help treat virus patients, and turning railway cars and a motor racing circuit into makeshift quarantine facilities.

The steps were taken after a nationwide lockdown announced last week by Prime Minister Narendra Modi led to a mass exodus of migrant workers from cities to their villages, often on foot and without food and water, raising fears that the virus may have reached to the countryside, where health care facilities are limited.

Indian health officials have

confirmed more than 1,000 cases of the coronavirus, including 29 deaths.

Experts say that local spreading is inevitable in a country where tens of millions of people live in dense urban areas with irregular access to clean water, and that the exodus of the migrants will burden the already strained health system.

As India's under-resourced health care system prepares to confront a wave of coronavirus cases, some state governments have asked liquor factories and breweries to produce liquid sanitizer after the initial supply failed to match demand. Designers, nonprofit groups and prisoners in various jails have stepped up to

help overcome shortages of masks and other personal protective equipment.

India has less than one medical doctor and three nurses per thousand people, the minimum recommended by the World Health Organization. The dominant share of India's doctors and beds are in the private health care sector, which the country's poor often cannot afford.

"India's big city hospitals are well equipped to deal with the surge in virus cases," said public health expert T. Sundararaman. "But the same can't be said about district hospitals in rural areas, barring some exceptions in states that fare well when it comes to health care."

On Monday, the Indian Council of Medical Research, India's top medical research body, said the country had conducted 38,442 tests for the virus as of March 29. India has a population of 1.3 billion people.

The governments of the states of Uttarakhand, Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh have announced in the past few days that intensive care units, ventilators and staff of private hospitals might be requisitioned to treat virus patients.

Joining the fight against the virus, New Delhi's top hospital, the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, said it is converting its trauma center into a coronavirus hospital,

the Press Trust of India news agency reported. The Buddh International Circuit, India's first Formula One racing track, was being readied for use as a shelter and quarantine facility, officials said.

Indian Railways announced on Saturday that it is converting some of its train coaches into isolation units for rural and remote areas. All passenger train service in the country has been suspended until April 14.

On Sunday, after tens of thousands of migrant workers had already made arduous dayslong journeys home on

foot, Modi apologized for the 21-day lockdown he ordered and said he had "no choice."

On Saturday, state borders were opened as hundreds of buses were sent by the authorities to transport migrant workers who live in squalid housing in congested urban ghettos and earn meager wages, often with no savings to fall back on.

The government's late response, however, struck a jarring note in comparison to its quick response to the plight of Indian workers stranded abroad, hundreds of whom were brought back home on special flights.

North Korea says US clearly doesn't want nuclear talks

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—North Korea said Monday that "reckless remarks" by U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo made it clear that Washington has no intention of resuming nuclear talks, and warned that it is now compelled to pay back "the pains the U.S. has imposed on our people."

After a teleconference of foreign ministers of the Group of Seven leading industrial nations last week, Pompeo told reporters the international community must remain united in urging North Korea to return to nuclear talks and in continuing to apply pressure on its nuclear and missile programs.

Pompeo's remarks showed

the U.S. has no strategy to stop "a countdown of confrontation," North Korea said in a statement attributed to its new Foreign Ministry department director general in charge of negotiations with Washington.

The statement said Pompeo's comments "seriously impaired the signboard of dialogue put up by the U.S. president as a decoy to buy time and create the environment favorable for himself." It referred to a recent personal letter that President Donald Trump sent to North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, which North Korea said was aimed at maintaining good relations and offering cooperation in fighting the coronavirus pandemic.

German cruise passengers head home, 41 remain in Australia

PERTH, Australia (AP)—More than 800 cruise ship passengers and crew were heading home to Germany on chartered flights on Monday while 41 others infected with the coronavirus were admitted to an Australian hospital after an argument over where they should be treated among local medical personnel.

Health authorities initially wanted to send the sick passengers aboard the cruise ship Artania to the Hollywood and Bethesda hospitals in the city of Perth. But nurses and doctors' groups argued that those hospitals were not equipped to cope with the disease. The fed-

eral government then struck a deal with the private Joondalup Health Campus, which was already treating patients with COVID-19, the disease caused by the virus.

"This humanitarian hospital care will be provided in one of the state's premier facilities, which is fully prepared for and is already treating COVID-19 patients," Federal Health Minister Greg Hunt said in a statement Monday.

Western Australia state Premier Mark McGowan said 844 Artania passengers and crew had begun flying home on four chartered flights on Monday.

"I understand about 479 crew members remain on the ship and I expect and hope that that ship will leave Western Australia in coming days," McGowan told reporters.

Around 200 Australians who reside in Western Australia and were aboard another cruise ship that arrived off Perth over the weekend, Vasco da Gama, were ferried on Monday to the vacation destination of Rottnest Island to be isolated for two weeks.

Another 600 Australians will be quarantined in a Perth hotel for two weeks.

On Australia's east coast, paramedics evacuated three

crew members overnight from a cruise ship that has become Australia's largest source of COVID-19 cases.

New South Wales state Chief Health Officer Kerry Chant said the three patients are not Australian citizens and were taken from the Ruby Princess, which is anchored off the Sydney coast, to a Sydney hospital with the help of water police.

Authorities have been criticized for allowing 2,700 passengers and crew to disembark from the ship when it docked in Sydney on March 19 despite COVID-19 test results remaining unknown.

World

Countries crack down on basic rights amid virus pandemic

BELGRADE, Serbia (AP)—Soldiers patrol the streets with their fingers on machine gun triggers. The army guards an exhibition center-turned-make-shift-hospital crowded with rows of bunks for those infected with the coronavirus. And Serbia's president warns residents that Belgrade graveyards won't be big enough to bury the dead if people ignore his government's lockdown orders.

Since President Aleksandar Vucic announced an open-ended state of emergency on March 15, parliament has been sidelined, borders shut, a 12-hour police-enforced curfew imposed and people over 65 banned from leaving their homes — some of Europe's strictest measures to combat the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Serbian leader, who makes dramatic daily appearances issuing new decrees, has assumed full power, prompting an outcry from opponents who say he has seized control of the state in an unconstitutional manner.

Rodoljub Sabic, a lawyer and former state commissioner for personal data protection, says that by proclaiming a state of emergency, Vucic has assumed "full supremacy" over decision-making during the crisis, although his constitutional role is only ceremonial.

"He issues orders which are automatically accepted by the government," Sabic said. "No checks and balances."

In ex-communist Eastern Europe and elsewhere, populist leaders are introducing harsh measures including uncontrolled cellphone surveillance of their citizens and lengthy jail sentences for those who flout lockdown decrees or spread false information.

The human rights chief of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe said that while he understands



In this March 26, 2020, photo, Serbian army soldiers patrol in Belgrade's main pedestrian street, in Serbia.

AP

the need to act swiftly to protect populations from the COVID-19 pandemic, the newly declared states of emergency must include a time limit and parliamentary oversight.

"A state of emergency—wherever it is declared and for whatever reason—must be proportionate to its aim, and only remain in place for as long as absolutely necessary," the OSCE rights chief, Ingibjörg Sólrún Gísladóttir, said in a statement.

In times of national emergency, countries often take steps that rights activists see as curtailing civil liberties, such as increased surveillance, curfews and restrictions on travel, or limiting freedom of expression. China locked down whole cities earlier this year to stop the spread of the virus as India did with the whole nation.

Amnesty International researcher Massimo Moratti said states of emergency are allowed under international human rights law, but warned that the restrictive measures should not become a "new normal."

"Such states need to last only until the danger lasts," he told The Associated Press.

In Hungary, parliament on Monday passed a law giving Prime Minister Viktor Orbán's government the right to rule by decree for as long as a state of emergency declared March 11 is in effect.

The law also amends the criminal code to include two new crimes. It sets prison terms of up to five years for those convicted of spreading false information about the pandemic and up to eight years for those interfering with efforts to contain the spread of

the coronavirus, like a curfew or mandatory quarantine.

Rights groups say the law creates the possibility of an indefinite and uncontrolled state of emergency and gives Orbán and his government carte blanche to restrict human rights.

"This is not the way to address the very real crisis that has been caused by the COVID-19 pandemic," said David Vig, Amnesty International's Hungary director.

Hungarian Justice Minister Judit Varga said criticism of Hungary's bill were "political attacks based on the wrong interpretation or intentional distortion" of its contents.

Elsewhere, governments have also adopted extreme measures.

In Israel, Benjamin Netanyahu's caretaker government passed a series of emergency executive measures to try to

quell the spread of the new virus. These include authorizing unprecedented electronic surveillance of Israeli citizens and a slowdown of court activity that forced the postponement of Netanyahu's own pending criminal trial on serious corruption charges.

In Russia, authorities have turned up the pressure on media outlets and social media users in an effort to control the narrative amid the growing coronavirus outbreak in that country, where the capital, Moscow, went on lockdown Monday and many other regions quickly followed suit.

Under the guise of weeding out coronavirus-related "fake news," law enforcement has cracked down on people sharing opinions on social media, and on news outlets that criticize the government's response to the outbreak.

Brazilian pews become trenches in fight against quarantine

RIO DE JANEIRO (AP)—Like every Sunday, Brazilian Pastor Silas Malafaia took the stage of his Pentecostal temple in a middle-class Rio de Janeiro neighborhood. But this week, he wore a T-shirt instead of a blazer and, behind the three cameras broadcasting to his legion of YouTube followers, were thousands of empty seats.

Brazil's churches have landed on the front lines of a battle between state governors, who have introduced quarantine measures designed to contain spread of the new coronavirus, and President Jair Bolsonaro, who is actively undermining them and says a broad lockdown will ultimately destroy Brazil's economy.

Brazil's politically powerful evangelicals helped bring the far-right president to power in the 2018 election and Bolsonaro is letting them know they aren't forgotten, political analysts said. The most influential pastors are backing the president's radical coronavirus stance while begrudgingly respecting governors' orders, and either canceling services or moving them online. There are signs some churches are disobeying.

"I'm asking, which is worse: coronavirus or social chaos?" Malafaia, one of Brazil's most prominent pastors who leads the Assembly of God Victory in Christ Church, told The Associated Press. "I can guarantee you that social convulsion is worse."

It mirrors the argument of Bolsonaro, who has urged governors to abandon lockdown and likened COVID-19 to a "little flu" that mainly threatens the elderly and those with preexisting health problems. On Sunday, he hit the streets wearing no gloves or mask and joined multiple gatherings, in defiance of recommendations from his own health ministry.

Bolsonaro, a conservative Catholic who married an evangelical in a service Malafaia administered, has zeroed in on the need to reopen the churches. "God is Brazilian," he told people on Sunday, O Globo newspaper reported.

Some religious organizations, such as the National Conference of Brazilian Bishops, have welcomed measures in Rio and Sao Paulo, where all non-essential businesses shut down.

UN aid chief says Syrian COVID-19 cases are 'tip of iceberg'

UNITED NATIONS (AP)—The U.N. humanitarian chief warned Monday that the 10 cases of COVID-19 and one death confirmed in Syria are just "the tip of the iceberg," and judging from other countries "a devastating impact" can be expected on vulnerable communities.

Mark Lowcock told the U.N. Security Council that "all efforts to prevent, detect and respond to COVID-19 are impeded by Syria's fragile health system," noting that only around half the country's hospitals and primary health care facilities were fully functional at the end of 2019.

He said efforts to prevent and combat the virus are also impeded by high levels of population movement, challenges to obtaining critical supplies including protective equipment and ventilators, and difficulties of isolating in crowded camps for the displaced with "low levels of sanitation services."

With the Syrian conflict entering its 10th year this month, Lowcock said, over half the population has been forced to flee their homes, more than 11 million people in the country including nearly 5 million children need humanitarian assistance, almost eight mil-

lion people don't have reliable access to food, over 20 percent more than last year, and 500,000 children are chronically malnourished.

He said humanitarian needs in Syria "remain enormous," with data showing clear evidence of deteriorating conditions since December, including increased rates of stunting—"a consequence of child malnutrition, from which it is rarely possible fully to recover." In the last rebel-held stronghold in northwest Syria, he said, almost 3 out of 10 displaced children under the age of five are stunted.

U.N. special envoy for Syr-

ia Geir Pedersen told the council that "after terrible violence, an uneasy calm prevails on the ground — and now, Syrians face a new potentially devastating threat in COVID-19."

He echoed U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres' call for an immediate global cease-fire in all conflicts to tackle the coronavirus, warning that "Syria is at high risk of being unable to contain the pandemic."

In northwest Syria, he said, "there has been a significant decrease in violence, especially in aerial attacks and ground operations. Sporadic incidents continue, involving all sides." And

in the northeast, he expressed appreciation that arrangements between key parties including Russia, Turkey, the United States and Syrians, "also continue to broadly hold."

"But in both the northeast and northwest, there is a real risk of hostilities resuming," Pedersen said in a video briefing to the council. "If that happened, the pre-existing dangers to civilians would be multiplied by the pandemic and the virus would spread like wildfire, with devastating effects for the Syrian people—humanitarian, societal and economic. It could rebound across international borders."

Life & Style

Singer John Prine is in stable condition, his wife says

NEW YORK (AP)—John Prine is in stable condition after being placed on a ventilator while being treated for COVID-19-type symptoms, his wife, Fiona Whelan Prine said Monday.

The singer-songwriter's family said Sunday that Prine was critically ill. Fiona Prine's message Monday on social media, suggested his condition had improved overnight. Prine remains hospitalized.

"Please continue to send your amazing love and prayers," she said on Twitter. "Sing his songs. Stay home and wash hands. John loves you. I love you."

News that Prine's health was in jeopardy provoked an outpouring of affection for Prine. Joan Baez responded with a video of her playing his song "Hello In There" from her kitchen.

Fiona Prine earlier in March tested positive for coronavirus and said the couple was quarantined and isolated from each other. Fiona Prine, who is also Prine's manager, said Monday that she has recovered from COVID-19.

The 73-year-old Prine, one of the most influential in folk and country music, has twice fought cancer. Most recently, he was diagnosed with lung cancer in 2013 and had part of a lung removed. The surgeries affected his voice but Prine continued to make music and to tour.

Van Gogh painting stolen from Dutch museum closed by virus

THE HAGUE, Netherlands (AP)—A painting by Dutch master Vincent van Gogh was stolen in an overnight smash-and-grab raid on a museum that was closed to prevent the spread of the coronavirus, police and the museum said Monday.

The Singer Laren museum east of Amsterdam said "The Parsonage Garden at Nuenen in Spring 1884" by the Dutch master was taken in the early hours of Monday. By early afternoon, all that could be seen from the outside of the museum was a large white panel covering a smashed door in the building's glass facade.

Museum General Director Evert van Os said the institution that houses the collection of American couple William



This image released by the Groninger Museum on Monday March 30, 2020, shows Dutch master Vincent van Gogh's painting titled "The Parsonage Garden at Nuenen in Spring" which was stolen from the Singer Museum in Laren, Netherlands, Monday March 30, 2020.

AP

and Anna Singer is "angry, shocked, sad" at the theft.

The value of the work, which was on loan from the Groninger Museum in the northern Dutch city of Gron-

ingen, was not immediately known. Van Gogh's paintings, when they rarely come up for sale, fetch millions at auction.

Police are investigating the theft.

"I'm shocked and unbelievably annoyed that this has happened," said Singer Laren museum director Jan Rudolph de Lorm.

"This beautiful and moving

painting by one of our greatest artists stolen - removed from the community," he added. "It is very bad for the Groninger Museum, it is very bad for the Singer, but it is terrible for us all because art exists to be seen and shared by us, the community, to enjoy to draw inspiration from and to draw comfort from, especially in these difficult times."

The 25-by-57-centimeter (10-by-22-inch) oil on paper painting shows a person standing in a garden surrounded by trees with a church tower in the background.

It dates to a time when the artist had moved back to his family in a rural area of the Netherlands and painted the life he saw there, including his famous work "The Potato Eaters," in mostly somber tones.

Tenor Placido Domingo feels 'fine' after coronavirus

MEXICO CITY (AP)—Tenor Placido Domingo said Monday he is resting at home after catching the new coronavirus.

Domingo said in a statement that he is "at home and I feel fine."

The 79-year-old was reportedly hospitalized in Mexico after publicly acknowledging on March 22

that he had tested positive for COVID-19 and said he was going into isolation.

Domingo, who has long-standing ties to Mexico, had suffered from a fever and a cough.

Domingo wrote on Monday that "from the very first symptom I was, as usual, under medical supervision, given my age and my comorbidity."

"My thoughts right now are with those who suffer and with all those who are generously working to save lives," he said. "I thank everyone for your affection and once again I recommend everyone to stay safe at home. See you soon."

For most people, the new coronavirus causes mild or moderate symptoms, such

as fever and cough that clear up in two to three weeks. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia and death.

The opera singer's illness comes after his own glittering career had recently been stained by sexual misconduct revelations.

ABC's Karl calls Rubio's tweet on media outrageous, hurtful

NEW YORK (AP)—The president of the White House Correspondents' Association on Monday called on Florida Sen. Marco Rubio to apologize for a tweet saying some media members "can't contain their delight" at reports of Americans getting the coronavirus.

Jonathan Karl, who is ABC News' White House correspondent, said Rubio's tweet was outrageous, wrong and hurtful.

There was no immediate response by the Florida Republican by social media or through a query to his Senate staff.

Yemeni-American poet Threa Almontaser wins Whitman award

NEW YORK (AP)—The Yemeni-American poet Threa Almontaser has won the Walt Whitman Award for best first book. Almontaser's "The Wild Fox of Yemen" comes out in April 2021.

Presented by the Academy

of American Poets, the award includes a six-week residency in Umbria, Italy, and \$5,000. In addition, the academy will purchase hundreds of copies of her book and distribute them to members.

"The spirit of Whitman lives



Almontaser

in these poems that sing and celebrate a vibrant, rebellious body with all its physical and spiritual en-

tanglements," award judge Harryette Mullen said in a statement.

The Whitman award was established in 1975 to champion emerging poets. Previous winners include Jenny Xie, Judy Jordan and Chris Llewellyn.

Long-absent dad chooses friend over his own family

DEAR ABBY: My father has been mostly absent from my life. We reconnected when I was an adult. I have always had feelings of abandonment, and because of this, I have constantly tried to build a relationship with him and allow him to have one with his grandchildren.

Dad met my friend of 10 years, "Danielle," two months ago when I threw him a birthday party. Since then, he and Danielle have begun a relationship on the sly. The problem is, Danielle tells Dad things I confided to her over the years, and he is coming back to me with whatever she has told him.

Dad has been separated for 14 years, and Danielle insisted that she wouldn't date him under those circumstances, but she did. Since the start of this, my relationship with my dad is even worse, and my long friendship with Danielle has been ruined because I know I can't trust her. Dad spends all of his time with her and her child now and hasn't begun to build a bond with me or his own grandchildren, which has been the story of my life, and my friend knows this. Abby, am I being selfish? What do you think I should do?

MORE THAN AWKWARD IN ARKANSAS

DEAR MORE: I don't think you are selfish. You have good reason to be hurt and disappointed. Your father is remaining true to character, but your friend has betrayed your trust. You may need the help of a licensed therapist to move beyond this, and that is what I recommend you do.

Believe me, you have my sympathy. But you can't change your father or Danielle. You can, however, change the way you react to them, and a therapist will help you do that more quickly than you can do it on your own.

DEAR READERS: On April 1, I like to share a few of the more offbeat letters I receive. Here are three:

DEAR ABBY: For more than 50 years, my wife has had a close relationship with a stuffed panda bear she received when she was 8 years old. His name is Daffy, and he sits by our fireplace and pretty much rules the house. She makes him "talk" and takes him places.

When I make a mistake, like not hanging up my jacket, I say that Daffy told me not to do it. She gets mad, and I get a lecture from Daffy about how he isn't to blame and he never makes a mistake. I am joking when I blame Daffy, but my wife and Daffy don't find it funny. Am I wrong to make a joke, or should I not blame Daffy? (Daffy told me to write this letter.)

PANDA-MONIUM OUT WEST

DEAR PANDA-MONIUM: It appears there are not one, but three "daffys" in your household. If you can't "bear" what's going on, stop joking.

P.S. You must think I'm daffy to believe this letter is legit.

DEAR ABBY: How do you address a letter to three doctors who are in a domestic partnership? Two are married to each other and have the same last name. I addressed it as, "Drs. Jane and John Doe and Joe Brown," but I wanted to be sure for future correspondence.

THREE'S COMPANY IN ATLANTA

DEAR T.C.: Surrounded by so many doctors, you must

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
FROM UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.



be receiving excellent health care! The correspondence should be addressed to "Drs. Jane and John Doe and Joe Brown, M.D." Joe earned his degree and deserves that title—even if he is coming in third.

DEAR ABBY: When I put my hand on my wife's knee at the dinner table last night, she blurted out the name of another man. What do you make of this?

CURIOUS IN CALIFORNIA

DEAR CURIOUS: Unless the name she blurted was Alfredo and you were eating pasta, I suspect you may have a problem.

HAPPY APRIL FOOLS' DAY, EVERYONE!

Abby shares more than 100 of her favorite recipes in two booklets: "Abby's Favorite Recipes" and "More Favorite Recipes by Dear Abby." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$16 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Cookbooklet Set, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

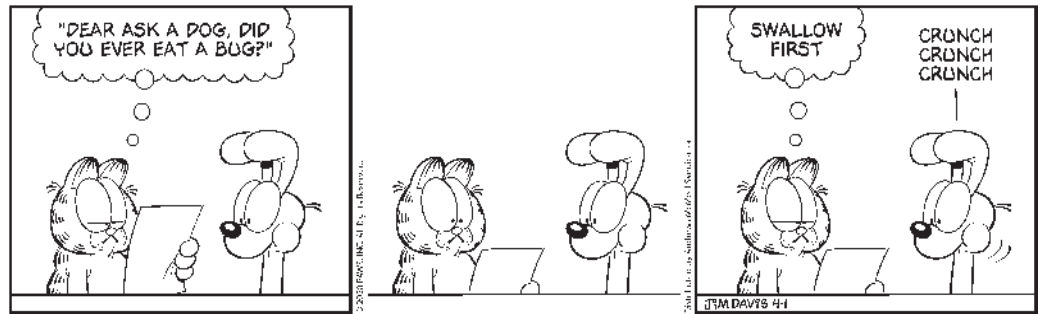
Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson



Garfield®

By Jim Davis



Adam@home

By Bryan Basset



The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Jokester
4 Marquis de —
8 Kvetch
12 Garten of the Food Network
13 Vicinity
14 Done with
15 Court divider
16 Nuke in an appliance, say
18 Nerd
20 Catch red-handed
21 Disaster aid org.
24 Photo-copier need
28 "Julia" actress Vanessa
32 Harvard rival
33 College URL ender
34 Cross-word diagrams
36 Sports-caster Berman
37 Profound

DOWN

39 Secret meeting
41 Start
43 DEA agent
44 Pen name
46 Decree
50 Be bratty
55 Pair
56 Exam format
57 Grand tale
58 Table support
59 Carton sealer
60 Cal or Georgia
61 Mag. staff

1 From the top
2 Portal
3 "Brooklyn Nine-Nine" actor
4 "Exodus" hero
5 Xmas time
6 Rodeo rider
7 "Selma" director
8 Speed (up)
9 Opposite of "post"
10 Feedbag tidbit
11 D followers
12 Artist
13 Chagall
14 Prompted
15 Clothing, informally
16 Witticism
17 401(k) alternative
18 Tree fluid
19 Chest-beating beast
20 London's Old —

Solution time: 23 mins.

Yesterday's answer 4-1

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Asa Butterfield, 23; Hillary Scott, 34; Taran Killam, 38; Susan Boyle, 59.

Happy Birthday: A little will go a long way this year. Hone your skills, and focus on what matters the most to you. You've spent too many years spreading yourself thin doing for others and not enough time engaging in your own best interests. It's your turn to head in a direction that will bring you the greatest joy. Your numbers are 5, 12, 19, 27, 35, 38, 42.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): You may feel targeted. Keep a low profile, take care of your responsibilities and don't let anyone goad you into a senseless argument. It's what you accomplish that will matter when all is said and done. ★★

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Consider your emotional needs, and start to make the changes necessary to ensure your happiness. Get the lowdown regarding the paperwork, financial plan or legal implications that you will have to deal with to get what you want. Romance is on the rise. ★★★★★

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Update your skills, knowledge and technological savvy. Refuse to let someone from your past disrupt your plans. Keep your feet planted on the ground when it comes to emotional matters. Willpower will be required if you want to get ahead. ★★★

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Emotional indulgence will be your enemy. Stay focused, and expand your knowledge, ideas and plans. Don't lose sight of your goals. Keep

life simple, live in the moment and don't overreact. Choose your words wisely, and make creativity a priority. ★★★

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Refuse to let an unexpected change lead to an argument. Keep your opinions to yourself until you know all the facts and you are sure you can live with the results should things not go your way. Take the high road. 3 stars

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Your kindness and generosity are admirable, but don't let anyone take advantage of you. Listen and make suggestions, but don't offer handouts. A partnership is looking exceptionally fortuitous. A makeover will lift your spirits and lead to compliments. ★★★★★

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Look for the good in whatever situation you face, and you will come out on top. If you overreact, take on too much or let someone bully you, it will lead to discord. Take pride in handling matters with grace and dignity. ★★

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Use your imagination, be creative and follow your heart. You have so much to gain if you pursue what makes you happy. Surround yourself with supportive people, not those who are jealous or use emotional manipulation. ★★★★★

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Pay off any personal debts as quickly as possible. Cut your overhead, and start thinking about your financial future. How you handle matters now will make a difference to the lifestyle you lead in the future. Avoid excess and indulgence. ★★★

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Make a change at home that will please someone you love or will bring you joy. Love and romance are on the rise, and the way you address personal matters will determine the outcome. Be open about the way you feel. ★★★



AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Concentrate on self-improvement, not trying to change others. Your health and emotional well-being should be priorities. Do what's best for you instead of trying to please everyone around you. Be responsible for your happiness, and follow your heart. ★★★



PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Share your thoughts and experience with someone you feel will benefit and offer something in return. A smart investment will pay off if you are patient and disciplined in the way you go about getting things done. ★★★★★

Birthday Baby: You are curious, engaging and observant. You are astute and intuitive.

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SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

By Dave Green

		4			5						
8			7	9					3		
	5		3	4	2		6				
		7				3					
3		5				9			2		
	1	9				6	8				
		8				4					
	9		2	1	4		7				
	7						3				

Difficulty Level ★★★

4/01

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

6	7	5	3	9	4	1	2	8
2	9	1	5	8	7	4	6	3
4	3	8	2	6	1	5	9	7
3	8	7	4	5	9	6	1	2
9	6	4	1	3	2	7	8	5
1	5	2	8	7	6	9	3	4
7	1	3	9	2	5	8	4	6
8	4	6	7	1	3	2	5	9
5	2	9	6	4	8	3	7	1

By Today's Level ★★

STUMPED?

For answers to today's crossword, call 1-900-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

WONDERWORD

By DAVID CUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

POLISH KIELBASA

Solution: 7 letters

R D L L I R G D S N O I N O S
S O E O T N E M I P L O E G P
W A A P I T O E Z E I V K A E
S A U S A G E U D G O J C R M
O H A E T H R B E L T K I L U
N C H L R E S R C S S H H I I
A I K I K K D U I T S M C C D
B W D N U O R G R L U A E E O
A D E K I E S A L T O R K L S
K N K S D G B I U T S O K T L
S A D C R K H I A T M J F E T
J S E C U A S T A S M R A E Y
E M I X E D O P S L E A R W P
I D R A H P L C A S A M M S E
W E D A M E M O H E T I H W S

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4/1

Belt, Blala, Casing, Chicken, Clove, Coarse, Cured, Deer, Deli, Dried, Duck, Farm, Fresh, Garlic, Grill, Ground, Hard, Heated, Hillshire, Homemade, Kabanos, Knights, Links, Marjoram, Meat, Mixed, Onions, Pack, Pimento, Potato, Region, Rice, Roasted, Salt, Sandwich, Sauces, Sauerkraut, Sausage, Smell, Smoked, Sodium, Staple, Sweet, Turkey, Types, U-Shaped, White, Wiejska, Zurek
Yesterday's Answer: **Legendary**
Treasures 14, 15, 17, 18 and 21 through 39 can be purchased online at www.WonderWordBooks.com.

NBA may play out season in one site sans fans



NEW YORK—The NBA season remains shut down for the foreseeable future, but the question remains. How is the league going to play out this season once it can get players back on the court?

Some NBA executives have one idea in mind, according to Mark Berman of the New York Post.

A possible coronavirus end-game? 30 teams, one arena, no fans. A group of executives are keen on the idea of arranging for the season to be played out at a single location:

Though news of the coronavirus pandemic has been discouraging, NBA executives still cling to hope of arranging a one-site, fan-less, 16-team play-off and a five-to-seven-game regular-season prelude, according to multiple NBA sources.

"They're very determined to have a champion," one industry source said.

The playoffs could be reduced to a slew of best-of-three series across the board. A single-elimination format has been all but ruled out—only under consideration as a last resort.

"Nothing is off the table," another league official said.

As far as where this could happen, one natural answer is UNLV in Las Vegas, which has hosted summer league games and is in a city with a massive hotel capacity. Berman also reports that there have been talks about the Bahamas, Orlando, Atlantic City, Hawaii and Louisville for the playoffs.

They key number here is 70 regular season games, as regional networks reportedly

have contracts calling for at least 70 games for local teams. All teams are currently around the mid-60s in games played, though many of those games have been nationally televised.

The reported best-case scenario is starting up the season in late June—in line with past reports—and delaying the opening of the 2020-21 season to Christmas. The NBA draft would also be postponed in such a situation.

The English Premier League has reportedly discussed a similar plan of playing out the season in isolation.

In that plan, players and key staff would be quarantined in separate hotels while waiting for their matches. Of course, such plan carries several drawbacks.

For starters, such a system would isolate players from their families. A single positive coronavirus test could also cause the whole system to collapse. And then there are the ethical questions of what happens when a player suffers a run-of-the-mill injury. Hospitals remain slammed by the coronavirus and could still be in a bad state by the time the NBA returns.

But that's where the sports world finds itself in the coronavirus pandemic. Teams want to start playing again. Fans want to watch them. Employees want financial security. At the end of the day, finding a way to play games that minimize risk for players and eliminate risk for spectators—by barring them from games—might be the least-bad option left.

Players-only NBA 2K tournament

The NBA is planning a play-



In this March 8, 2020 file photo, Los Angeles Lakers forward LeBron James, left, shoots as Los Angeles Clippers forward Kawhi Leonard defends during the first half of an NBA game in Los Angeles. AP

ers-only NBA 2K tournament that will feature the league's sharpest video gamers and it will be broadcast on ESPN, league sources said.

The league hopes to launch the event Friday, with the 16-player tournament lasting 10 days and including Utah Jazz All-Star Donovan Mitchell and four-time All-Star DeMarcus Cousins, among other big-name players, sources said.

With the sports landscape on pause due to the coronavirus pandemic and the federal government extending the social-distancing measure to at least April 30, the league has been forced to evaluate the safest way to bring basketball fans some action.

Players competing against their peers in the comfort of their own homes could offer a distraction for fans who are missing the game and a little competition.

The league is still finalizing some details of the tournament, sources said.

Los Angeles Lakers star Anthony Davis and Milwaukee Bucks star Giannis Antetokounmpo were the past two NBA 2K cover athletes.

Meanwhile, ESPN will air NBA doubleheaders on Wednesday nights during April showcasing key NBA Finals games.

The doubleheaders begin this Wednesday with two games from the 2016 NBA Finals between the Cleveland Cavaliers and the Golden State Warriors, where the Cavaliers became the first team in league history to rally from a 3-1 deficit to win the title.

TOKYO (AP)—The Tokyo Olympics will open next year in the same time slot scheduled for this year's games.

Tokyo organizers said Monday the opening ceremony will take place on July 23, 2021—almost exactly one year after the games were due to start.

"The schedule for the games is key to preparing for the games," Tokyo organizing committee president Yoshiro Mori said. "This will only accelerate our progress."

Last week, the IOC and Japanese organizers postponed the Olympics until 2021 because of the coronavirus pandemic.

This year's games were scheduled to open on July 24 and close on Aug. 9. But the near exact one-year delay will see the rescheduled closing ceremony on Aug. 8.

There had been talk of switching the Olympics to spring, a move that would coincide with the blooming of Japan's famous cherry blossoms.

Tokyo Olympics reset for July 23-Aug. 8 in 2021

But it would also clash with European soccer and North American sports leagues.

Mori said a spring Olympics was considered but holding the games later gives more space to complete the many qualifying events that have been postponed by the virus outbreak.

"We wanted to have more room for the athletes to qualify," Mori said.

After holding out for weeks, local organizers and the IOC last week postponed the Tokyo Games under pressure from athletes, national Olympic bodies and sports federations. It's the first postponement in Olympic history, though there were several cancellations during wartime.

The Paralympics were rescheduled to Aug. 24-Sept. 5.

The new Olympic dates would conflict with the sched-

uled world championships in track and swimming, but those events are now expected to also be pushed back.

"The IOC has had close discussions with the relevant international federations," organizing committee CEO Toshiro Muto said. "I believe the IFs have accepted the games being held in the summer."

Muto said the decision was made Monday and the IOC said it was supported by all the international sports federations and was based on three main considerations: to protect the health of athletes, to safeguard the interests of the athletes and Olympic sport, and the international sports calendar.

"These new dates give the health authorities and all involved in the organisation of

the Games the maximum time to deal with the constantly changing landscape and the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic," the IOC said. "The new dates ... also have the added benefit that any disruption that the postponement will cause to the international sports calendar can be kept to a minimum, in the interests of the athletes and the IFs."

Both Mori and Muto have said the cost of rescheduling the Olympics will be "massive"—local reports estimate billions of dollars—with most of the expenses borne by Japanese taxpayers.

Muto promised transparency in calculating the costs, and testing times deciding how they are divided up.

"Since it (the Olympics) were scheduled for this sum-

mer, all the venues had given up hosting any other events during this time, so how do we approach that?" Muto asked. "In addition, there will need to be guarantees when we book the new dates, and there is a possibility this will incur rent payments. So there will be costs incurred and we will need to consider them one by one. I think that will be the tougher process."

Katsuhiro Miyamoto, an emeritus professor of sports economics at Kansai University, puts the costs as high as \$4 billion. That would cover the price of maintaining stadiums, refitting them, paying rentals, penalties and other expenses.

Japan is officially spending \$12.6 billion to organize the Olympics. However, an audit bureau of the Japanese government says the costs are twice

that much. All of the spending is public money except \$5.6 billion from a privately funded operating budget.

The Switzerland-based International Olympic Committee is contributing \$1.3 billion, according to organizing committee documents. The IOC's contribution goes into the operating budget.

IOC President Thomas Bach has repeatedly called the Tokyo Olympics the best prepared in history. However, Deputy Prime Minister Taro Aso also termed them "cursed." Aso competed in shooting in the 1976 Olympics, and was born in 1940.

The Olympics planned for 1940 in Tokyo were canceled because of Japan's war with China.

The run-up to the Olympics also saw IOC member Tsunekazu Takeda, who also headed the Japanese Olympic Committee, forced to resign last year amid a bribery scandal.

Pats' special teams ready to adjust to changes



BOSTON
(AP)—Strong special teams play has been one of the staples of the Patriots under Bill Belichick.

Few players know that more than longtime special teams captain Matt Slater, one of the most recognized leaders in New England's locker room.

The unit has already undergone big changes this offseason following the departures of former coordinator Joe Judge, kicker Stephen Gostkowski and Nate Ebner.

It's left the 34-year-old Slater, who recently agreed to a two-year deal, as the team's most-tenured player following the exits of Tom Brady and Gostkowski.

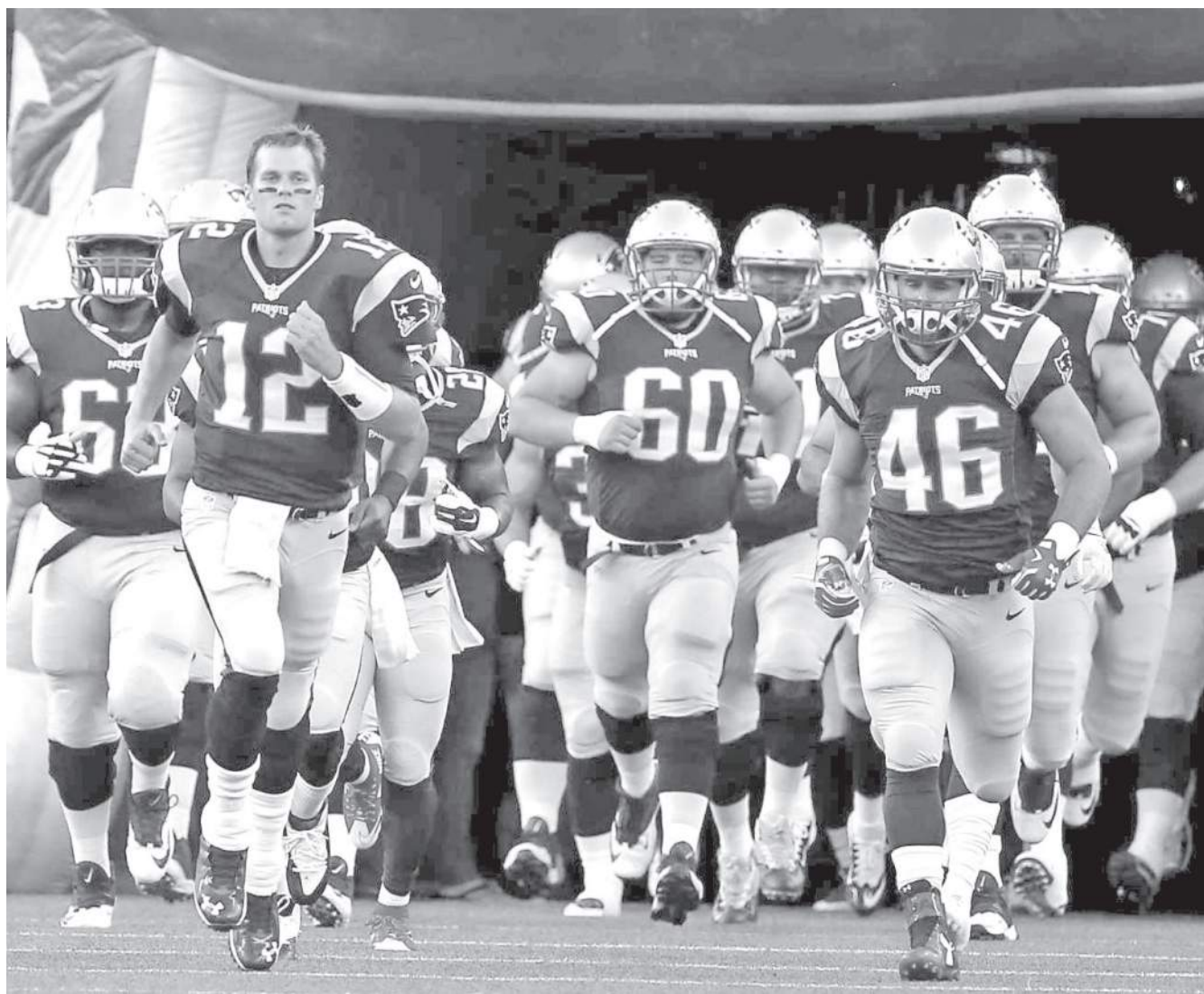
"We're going to have to find a new identity for ourselves," Slater said Monday. "But I think part of that identity is gonna be built upon things that we've always stood for and we'll continue to stand for as long as this organization is led by the people that it's led by."

Finding replacements for Gostkowski and Ebner won't be easy.

Gostkowski spent his entire 14-year career in New England, won three Super Bowl rings and passed Adam Vinatieri as the Patriots' leading scorer before being released last week.

Ebner, also a three-time champ with the Patriots, left in free agency and signed with the Giants where he will be reunited with Judge.

Slater said losing Ebner is huge for him personally, after working more closely with



Ebner than any other player over the past eight seasons.

"His value to what we did in the kicking game, it just is off the charts," Slater said. "It would never be something that gets talked about because there's so many intricacies within the kicking game that get overlooked. But the things he has done for this football team on and off the field the last eight years have been tremendous."

Nick Folk finished the sea-

son as the Patriots kicker after Gostkowski went on injured reserve in October and had hip surgery. But he is a free agent and at age 35 was never meant to be a long-term replacement.

The Patriots have also added players with special teams experience in recent weeks, including Adrian Phillips and Cody Davis.

And Slater said Cam Achord, who has spent the past two seasons as a special teams assistant, is someone

he is confident is ready to step into Judge's shoes as coordinator.

The Patriots haven't announced who will replace Judge, but Belichick has often chosen to promote coaches within the organization to coordinator posts.

"We're really comfortable with his coaching style and we know how he likes to call the game," Slater said of Achord. "He's gonna have the same expectations

of us that have always been had around here. And that's pride yourself on working hard, pride yourself on doing your job the right way, pride yourself on being a selfless team player, and don't expect anything to be handed to you."

Meanwhile, free agent safety Eric Reid wants the NFL's new collective bargaining agreement invalidated over language added following ratification of the

AP
In this undated file photo, New England Patriots quarterback Tom Brady and his teammates run onto the field for an NFL game against the Miami Dolphins in Foxborough, Mass.

pact earlier this month.

He is calling for an investigation and a re-vote.

In a letter to the NFLPA on Monday, Reid's lawyers said language posted on the players association's website after passage of the agreement by a 1,019-959 vote on March 15 contains different language than the one players signed off on.

The new CBA is set to begin with the upcoming 2020 season and extend through 2030.

The letter from attorneys Ben Meiselas and Ray Genco highlight a difference in wording in the section about the league's disability plan that affects hundreds, and potentially thousands, of ex-players who applied for Social Security disability insurance payments before Jan. 1, 2015. In the version the players received and approved, those offsets applied only to players who applied after Jan. 1, 2015.

In a series of tweets Monday, Reid, a vocal opponent of the agreement, provided screenshots of the CBA agreement that showed the language added after players approved the deal.

The NFL declined comment and the NFLPA did not respond to a request for comment on Reid's letter or say why the language was modified after the vote.

ENGLEWOOD, Colorado
(AP)—The Denver Broncos have finalized a three-year, \$7 million deal with free agent punter Sam Martin, the third former Detroit Lions player signed by general manager John Elway this month.

Martin joins former Detroit teammates Graham Glasgow and Jeff Driskel in Denver. Glasgow, a guard and center, signed a four-year, \$44 million deal and Driskel signed a two-year, \$5 million contract to serve as quarterback Drew Lock's backup.

Martin is an eighth-year pro who appeared in 106 games for the Lions after being selected in the fifth round of the 2013 NFL draft out of Appalachian State.

In seven seasons, he's averaged 46 yards per punt with a 40.9-yard net average with 38 touchbacks and 175 punts inside the 20-yard line.

Martin, who also handled kickoffs in Detroit, and the Saints' Thomas Morstead are

Broncos continue raiding Lions roster in free agency

the only two punters in the NFL to have played at least 10 games in each of the last six seasons without a punt getting blocked.

Last year, Martin ranked second in the league with just 4.5 yards allowed per punt return.

The Broncos also announced Monday that they had re-signed unrestricted free agent Jeremiah Attaochu to a one-year contract.

Attaochu's deal is for \$1.5 million with a chance to earn \$1 million more in incentives.

Attaochu is a seventh-year pro who has amassed 99 tackles, 15½ sacks and three forced fumbles in six NFL seasons with the Broncos (2019), Jets (2018) and Chargers (2014-17), who made him a second-round pick in the 2014 NFL draft out of Georgia Tech.

In Los Angeles, the Chargers confirmed Monday that

they have agreed to terms with offensive tackle Bryan Bulaga, cornerback Chris Harris Jr., defensive tackle Linval Joseph and linebacker Nick Vigil.

The deals with Bulaga, Harris and Joseph were reached nearly two weeks ago, but filing the necessary paperwork has been curtailed due to the coronavirus pandemic. Teams have been allowed to announce contracts once they are listed on the NFL's daily transaction report.

Bulaga and Harris were considered to be among the top players available at their respective positions. Bulaga is reunited with Chargers offensive line coach James Campen, who served as his position coach in Green Bay the first nine seasons of his career. Campen was recently hired by the Chargers after spending last season with Cleveland.

Harris joins a unit that has fellow cornerbacks Casey Hayward and Desmond King Jr. as well as safety Derwin James.

Joseph's forte is run stopping and he should pair well with defensive ends Joey Bosa and Melvin Ingram. Vigil, who reached an agreement with the Chargers late last week, was second on the Cincinnati Bengals in tackles in last season and will contribute to a linebacking group that has lacked depth the past couple years.

In Pittsburgh, the Steelers signed defensive end Dewayne Hendrix, safety Tyree Kinnel and linebacker/long snapper Christian Kuntz to one-year deals on Monday. All three played in the XFL under the startup league that suspended operations earlier this month because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Hendrix had four tackles

and a sack for the St. Louis BattleHawks. Kinnel finished with 17 tackles for the DC Defenders while Kuntz served as the long snapper for the Dallas Renegades.

The signing is a homecoming for both Hendrix and Kuntz. Hendrix played for the University of Pittsburgh from 2015-18 while Kuntz is from the Pittsburgh suburbs and played at Duquesne University. Kuntz, who won the Northeast Conference Defensive Player of the Year Award twice, spent some time with the Steelers during training camp last year but did not make the 53-man roster.

The signing also reunites Kinnel with former Michigan teammates Devin Bush and Zach Gentry. Kinnel played four years at Michigan, finishing with 154 tackles, a sack and two interceptions.

In Wisconsin, the Green

Bay Packers are keeping running back/return specialist Tyler Ervin.

Packers general manager Brian Gutekunst announced Monday that the team has re-signed Ervin, who played in four regular-season games and two playoff contests for Green Bay last season.

The Packers claimed Ervin off waivers from the Jacksonville Jaguars on Dec. 3.

Ervin averaged 26.7 yards on six kickoff returns and 9.6 yards on 11 punt returns for Green Bay during the regular season.

In the playoffs, Ervin returned three kickoffs for a total of 41 yards. He also had one punt return for 6 yards.

The Houston Texans selected Ervin out of San Jose State in the fourth round of the 2016 draft. He played for the Texans (2016-18) and Jaguars (2019) before joining the Packers. He also was on the Baltimore Ravens' practice squad in 2018.

MLB ponders post-virus season, players worry about health



**N E W
Y O R K** —
As Major
L e a g u e

Baseball and the players' union contemplate various ways to create a schedule for whenever the coronavirus pandemic subsides, Cincinnati Reds catcher Tucker Barnhart raised a concern that is surely shared by others around the sport: Could trying to cram in games, and maybe extend the season into late November or December, lead to injuries?

"The player safety piece is a big thing," Barnhart, a union representative, said Monday on a conference call with reporters.

That involves how many off-days are salvaged in 2020, how many times teams are told to play in any given week and how 2021 could be affected if there is a shorter-than-usual off-season.

"Moving forward, I don't think you can do things that are going to compromise the integrity of next season, as well. What I mean by that is forcing

the issue of getting so many games in that you risk injury, and you risk major injury to players, because you are trying to get in as many games as you can," Barnhart said.

"This is all assumptions and thoughts from me specifically—it's not from the—but you're going to have to protect us as players," he continued. "And if you can't do that, I think that would be where I personally would kind of draw the line."

That's also top of mind for Pittsburgh Pirates pitcher Jameson Taillon, who already has been ruled out for 2020 while recovering from a second reconstructive surgery on his right elbow. He's brought up the idea of trying to return if the season goes into November, but said that's been "shut down pretty quickly."

Speaking more generally about the effect an altered season could have on guys around the majors, Taillon said: "This is a unique situation. We're going to have to be careful health-wise."

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were made since players are not allowed to go to the NMI Soccer Training Center in Kolblerville or any pitches due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the 2020 NMIFA Spring Youth League is still suspended.

Players who need assistance in performing the drills can contact Angeles or his fellow NMIFA staff Angie Ito via email at jangeles@nmifa.com

or mito@nmifa.com.

Besides posting instructional videos, NMIFA has also issued safety tips to players and the rest of the members of the community in its bid to help lower the risk of the virus spread in the CNMI.

Proper hydration and nutrition, enough rest, washing of hands, and performing exercises or activities at home and in a safe environment to prevent injuries are on NMIFA's recommended to-do list.



AP
Detroit Tigers pitcher Tarik Skubal warms up before pitching to the Houston Astros during the first inning of a spring training baseball game, Monday, March 9, 2020, in West Palm Beach, Fla.

about it," he said. "And the same goes with ownership and all of that. So everybody wants to make money."

Nats' training facility turned into testing venue

The Washington Nationals' spring training facility in West Palm Beach, Florida, has been shut down and converted into a coronavirus testing facility.

All 13 players and the accompanying team staff who were working at FITTEAM Ballpark of the Palm Beaches—the shared spring training home of the Nationals and Houston Astros—dispersed once Florida governor Ron DeSantis ordered the closure of all non-essential businesses.

"Our medical staff is still working on finding some off-site facilities for some players," Mike Rizzo said Monday on a conference call. "The handful of players that are rehabbing from injuries from last season... it's a very, very small list, and obviously the injuries were a long time ago. It's not something that's of essential importance, and obviously the safety and the health of all the staff and all the players is paramount. Again, we are in constant communication with all players about their health and their training."

No one knows when baseball and other suspended sports will resume, because no one knows when life might return to normal in the aftermath of the COVID-19 outbreak. Three-quarters of a million people around the world have become infected and over 35,000 have died, according to a running count kept by Johns Hopkins University, counts that include more than 140,000 infections and more than 2,500 deaths in the U.S.

Spring training was halted on March 12; opening day was supposed to be last week and won't happen any earlier than mid-May.

"At this point, it's hard to say what can or should be done. MLB is exhausting all of their manpower and manpower, along with the 30 clubs, to come up with some

ideas and what's the best way to play a regular season in as many games as possible and get to a playoff scenario," said Washington Nationals general manager Mike Rizzo, whose team has turned over the grounds of its spring facility to public testing for the coronavirus.

"As the commissioner said, we're going to need to get creative," Rizzo added. "But beyond that, we're just speculating on all of these things."

MLB and its players are hoping to complete initial discussions on scheduling by April 10, and among the proposals under consideration: pushing back the end of the season, even if it involves using neutral sites and domes to avoid colder weather in many cities; increasing doubleheaders to get more games in per week than usual; playing games without

spectators; changing the post-season format.

"We've been told," said Taillon, a union rep, "there's no such thing as a bad idea right now."

Texas Rangers shortstop Elvis Andrus, also a union rep, described a recent call about scheduling options with other players this way: "We were basically talking about potential scenarios and how crazy this season will be, how challenging it will be."

Barnhart, for one, is realistic about what is going to drive the ultimate decisions about what a season might look like.

"It goes without saying that, as players, we want to play as many games (as possible), not only because we love playing, but also we want to make as much money as possible. That's the God's honest truth

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tional Team member James Lee has been tasked to select Irving's teammates with the 670 Dream Team.

Lee has also named his starting five with John Maratita, Elias Rangamar, Mark Wallace, and Peter Camacho joining forces with Irving.

With Lee's selection, the NMI Hoopfest will feature the young guns versus the tried and tested veterans.

"These four guys might not be the fastest or biggest even at their prime, but their basketball IQ, in my opinion, are one of the highest and they can move the ball quick as well as shoot at any spot on offense. And as for defense, they'll know how to break you apart right from the start," Lee said.

He can't wait to see the starters team up with Irving.

"Irving is an all-around player. He has the best ball handling skills at the moment, quick, can shoot at any location, good at setting up plays for his teammates, and if he needs to carry the team, he



SAIPAN TRIBUNE
Shane Deleon Guerrero, left, seen here playing for Docomo Pacific in a local league last year, will be one of coach Joe Diaz's starters.



SAIPAN TRIBUNE
NMI Rollers' Ben Lisua, center, seen here driving against two Sonics defenders during a local league, has been selected to suit up for Marianas Faith.

can. And he's also good on defense," Lee said.

Lee won't be calling the shots for the 670 Dream Team and instead will let his starters pick their teammates and strategize for the game.

"Again those guys' basketball IQ is so high that they'll

just look at each other and know what to do without saying a word," said Lee, who wished he could have the late Ric Alegre join the team.

Meanwhile, *Saipan Tribune* is still working on the date for the biggest basketball showdown in the CNMI, but at this

early, the publication would like to let the public know that spectators would not be paying any fees to watch the game at the MHS Gym.

Saipan Tribune would also like to remind basketball fans in the CNMI that today is April Fools' Day.



NBA may
play out
season in one
site sans fans

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Saipan Tribune Sports

Pats' special
teams ready
to adjust to
changes

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SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Giannis vs Kyrie in NMI Hoopfest

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The islands' basketball fans will be treated to a show, as *Saipan Tribune* is set to bring in NBA superstars Giannis Antetokounmpo and Kyrie Irving to play in the NMI Hoopfest at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.



The Milwaukee Bucks standout will team up with four local players and will be coached by NMI Rollers Basketball Club's Joe Diaz.

The veteran coach has already selected the four players that will make up his starting five along with Antetokounmpo. Diaz will utilize former MHS players Shane Deleon Guerrero and Prince Factor as his point guard and small forward, respectively,



NBA superstars Giannis Antetokounmpo, left, and Kyrie Irving will cross paths on Saipan as they play in the NMI Hoopfest at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

Mt. Carmel School's Chioni Dela Cruz will be his shooting guard, and Kagman High School alumni Ben Lisua will be the squad's power forward.

"Giannis will be our center, but we all know he can play three positions—he can play small forward, can shoot at No. 2, and also post up. We are excited to have him on the team," Diaz said.

"As for the four local players, I chose them for our the starting unit because they have the height and can play both on offense and defense. I know what they are capable of doing on the court," said Diaz.

When asked what will be the name of his team, the respected coach said, "Marianas Faith."

"Because with all these challenges we are facing with the COVID-19 pandemic, we should have faith, love, and respect with each other," said Diaz, adding that he will hold a series of tryouts for the remaining slots on the team.

"When it's OK and safe to go out, we will have tryouts at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium," he said.

Marianas Faith will be battling the Irving-led 670 Dream Team.

Former CNMI Men's Na-

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Mateo Angeles demonstrates the toe tops drill. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Learn soccer techniques at home

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Still want to work on your soccer skills and stay fit while at home?

Let Northern Mariana Islands Football Association help you do that.

NMIFA has created instructional videos that



will help players improve their coordination with the ball and ball feeling and the footages are available on social media (NMI Soccer and

NMIFA Facebook pages).

Under the coordination with the ball video, youth players are taught how to improve coordination, balance, and flexibility by following several drills: latte stone, skipper, cup and clap, rainbows and waterfalls, crazy 8s, and sitting latte stone.

For the other video, players will learn how to improve touches on the ball using the different parts of their body. Drills include toe taps, trickster, rock n' rolls, and ninja.

"NMIFA would like to encourage all youth players to continue to improve their soccer techniques and at the same time keep their fitness by doing these exercises at home regularly," NMIFA staff Jerish Angeles said.

The instructional videos

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Matty Angeles performs the around latte stone drill. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO